

**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 February 2024**

**I. Export Performance**

- Highest monthly merchandise exports, in the current FY so far, was recorded in February 2024. Merchandise exports during February 2024 are USD 41.40 Billion as compared to USD 37.01 Billion in February 2023, registering a positive growth of 11.86%.
- Engineering Goods exports in February 2024 record an increase of 15.9% at USD 9.94 Billion over USD 8.58 Billion in February 2023.
- Electronic Goods exports register an increase of 54.81% at USD 3.00 Billion in February 2024 over USD 1.94 Billion in February 2023.
- Exports of Organic and Inorganic Chemicals increase by 33.04% from USD 2.22 Billion in February 2023 to USD 2.95 Billion in February 2024.
- Exports of Drugs and Pharmaceutical Products in February 2024 recorded at USD 2.51 Billion which is an increase of 22.24% over USD 2.06 Billion in February 2023.
- Petroleum Products exports in February 2024 register growth of 5.08% at USD 8.24 Billion from USD 7.84 Billion in February 2023.

**II. Bilateral Trade**

- The Commerce and Industry Minister (CIM) met the Shadow Foreign Secretary and Shadow Secretary of State for Business & Trade, UK on February 5, 2024 in New Delhi.
- CIM had a meeting with media delegation from 18 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean Region on February 19, 2024 in New Delhi.
- A virtual meeting between CIM and the Minister of State for Foreign Trade of the United Arab Emirates was held on February 21, 2024 to discuss the India-UAE matter and the WTO MC 13 meeting.
- CIM met the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Hungary on February 21, 2024 at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, New Delhi.
- CIM met the Minister of Labour and Economy, Austria, to discuss bilateral issues on February 22, 2024 in New Delhi.
- A meeting of CIM with the Norwegian Parliamentary Delegation was held in New Delhi on February 26, 2024 to review the progress of the India-EFTA TEPA and discuss India-Norway bilateral trade relations.
- An Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) meeting under the chair of the Commerce Secretary on India-EFTA FTA was held on February 6, 2024.

- The Commerce Secretary met the UK's Secretary of State for Business and Trade on February 21, 2024 in New Delhi to discuss the way forward in India-UK FTA negotiations.
- The Commerce Secretary had a meeting with the UK Director General, Trade Negotiations at the Department for Business & Trade (DBT) and with the UK PM's Chief Economic Adviser on February 21 and 22, 2024 respectively, to take stock of the progress and the way forward in India-UK FTA negotiations.
- In the India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA), negotiations were held at the chief negotiator level and team level in goods, rules of origin and services (including financial services and telecom) during February 21–23, 2024. The Chief Negotiators also had detailed deliberations on February 27 and 29, 2024 to resolve the outstanding issues in the India-UK FTA. A presentation on the India-UK FTA was also made before the Prime Minister on February 16, 2024.
- The 7th Round of India-EU FTA Negotiations was held at the chief negotiator level from February 16–27, 2024. Negotiations on 19 chapters of the FTA were held in 85 technical sessions.
- The 1st round of negotiations (3rd meeting of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) Joint Committee) for review of AITIGA was held in New Delhi from February 16–19, 2024.
- The 6th round of India-Peru trade agreement negotiations was held from February 12–14, 2024 in Lima, Peru.
- Additional Secretary-level meetings were held with the Ambassador of Bahrain to India and the Ambassador of Qatar to India on February 13, 2024 and February 29, 2024 respectively, in New Delhi to discuss trade-related issues.
- India-Oman CEPA intersessional meetings were held at Additional Secretary level on February 7-8, 2024 in New Delhi.
- A meeting was held on February 14, 2024 with the EOI in Moscow, APEDA, MPEDA, Pharmexcil and Tobacco Board at the Joint Secretary level to discuss trade-related issues regarding the Russian Federation in New Delhi.

### III. **SEZ**

- During the month of February 2024, Development Commissioners of various SEZs have approved the proposals of investment of Rs. 39,772.75 crore which will also provide employment to 30,471 persons.

### IV. **Export Infrastructure**

- During February 2024, a total amount of Rs. 6.425 crore was released/reassigned for various projects under TIES as per detail given below:
  - i. Rs. 2.33 crore (2nd tranche of 1st installment) was released to Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) for “setting up common infrastructure facilities at Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel Niryat Suvidha Kendra at Chunar Tehsil, Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh”.

- ii. Rs. 65.50 lakh (4th tranche of final installment) was released to Export Inspection Council (EIC) for “construction of office cum laboratory complex of EIA at Vishakapatnam”.
- iii. Rs. 1.69 crore (3rd tranche of first installment) was released to Himachal Pradesh State Industrial Development Corporation (HPSIDC) for “Pharma Lab Baddi-Phase-II at Solan, Himachal Pradesh”.
- iv. Rs. 1.75 crore (1st tranche of final installment) was released to Andhra Pradesh Meditech Ltd. (AMTZ) for “Design, construction and manufacturing of Technetium 99m Generator (Medical radio-isotope), Visakhapatnam”.

## V. **Export Promotion**

- The Chemicals and Allied Products Export Promotion Council (CAPEXIL) organised a Reverse Buyer-Seller Meet (RBSM) for books, publications, printing services, and paper products from February 7–9, 2024 under the Market Access Initiative (MAI) Scheme in which 54 member exporters and 18 overseas delegates participated. CAPEXIL also organised a webinar programme with the Indian Institute of Materials Management, Chennai and with the Export Inspection Agency, Chennai through virtual mode on February 28, 2024 which was attended by around 111 members and staff.
- The Basic Chemicals, Cosmetics, and Dyes Export Promotion Council (CHEMEXCIL) organised a webinar on the EU’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)—opportunities and risks for the Indian chemicals industry on February 15, 2024 which was attended by 52 member participants. CHEMEXCIL organised a city seminar series on the subject Global Chemical Regulatory Outlook 2024 at various locations in the country, such as Vapi, Ankleshwar, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Bengaluru, Pune and Mumbai during February 2024 which was attended by the Council’s member exporters.
- The Plastics Export Promotion Council (PLEXCONCIL) organised a virtual meeting to promote PLEXCONNECT 2024 on February 16, 2024 amongst the Mexican companies, so as to mount a delegation of Mexican companies to visit Plexconnect 2024 and participate in the planned RBSM during the Plexconnect 2024 show in Mumbai. PLEXCONCIL also organised a webinar on payment mechanisms in Rupee-Ruble bilateral trade on February 23, 2024 with SBER Bank with the objective of understanding payment mechanisms in Rupee-Ruble bilateral trade in the case of trade between India and Russia.
- Shellac Export Promotion Council (SHEFEXIL) extended membership to 21 new companies in February 2024.
- Information about 103 upcoming projects in infrastructure, water, power, and consulting was circulated by the Project Exports Promotion Council (PEPC) to its members in February 2024.
- The Telecom Equipment & Services Exports Promotion Council (TEPC) organised the Bharat Pavillion at Mobile World Congress 2024 from February 26–29, 2024 in Barcelona, Spain.
- The Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (Pharmexcil) held a capacity-building programme on the subject of ‘Importance of Quality Compliance and Patient Safety’ in Indore on February 2, 2024. Pharmexcil, with the support of DoC, organised International Exhibition for Pharma and Healthcare in Latin America (IPHEX LATAM)

with a business delegation of 78 companies to Guatemala, Colombia and Chile. This was the largest business delegation to the Latin American (LATAM) region, one of the focus areas for pharma exports. Pharmexcil also organised the “India Pavilion” at Asia Pharma Expo 2024 on February 29, 2024 in Dhaka, Bangladesh with the support of DoC and the participation of 21 companies.

- The Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESCEPC) in association with the Indian Embassy, Norway and the Norway India Chamber of Commerce and Industry organised a virtual B2B meet on February 29, 2024 between the Indian and Norwegian industries. This initiative will help to create awareness among the Norwegians to look to source their requirements in the IT sphere to India.

## **VI. APEDA**

- On February 29, 2024, APEDA flagged off the first consignment of 24 MT of Colocasia from Pakur, Jharkhand to Malaysia.
- On February 28, 2024, APEDA flagged off the first consignment of 12.6 MT of pomegranates by sea protocols developed jointly with NRC, Sholapur from Mumbai to the USA.
- On February 17, 2024, APEDA flagged off the first shipment of bananas from Mumbai to Moscow, Russia through a sea protocol developed in collaboration with CISH Lucknow.
- On February 13, 2024, APEDA flagged off the first consignment of 16 MT of natural honey from the Bodo territorial council area of Assam to Dubai, sourced directly from three farmer producer companies.
- On February 2, 2024, APEDA organised a flag-off ceremony for the first consignment of spray-dried soy milk powder from Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh to Oman.
- 'Agri-Export: Capacity Building cum Buyer-Seller Meet' was organised at Mirzapur on February 14, 2024. The Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Smt. Anupriya Patel, inaugurated the event. Nearly 2000 farmers, as well as representatives from exporter associations, farmer producer organisations (FPOs), and other stakeholders participated.
- APEDA participated with 72 exhibitors at Gulfood 2024 (February 19–23, 2024) in Dubai, promoting a diverse array of agricultural start-ups, Farmers' Producer Organisations (FPOs), entrepreneurs, and prominent exporters from India with their innovative products, high-quality agricultural commodities, and value-added food products to a global audience.

## **VII. MPEDA**

- MPEDA has enrolled 159 farms, formed 32 new cluster farms, and organised 1,856 training programmes during February 2024.
- During the month of February 2024, 4 exporters, 2 processing plants, 3 handling centres, 2 storages, 2 peeling sheds and 1 conveyance were issued certificates of registration. Currently, 431 EU-approved seafood processing establishments and 69 EU-approved cold storage facilities are present.

## **VIII. Plantation Sector**

- Tea Board participated in Horti Food Festival held at Kolkata from February 17-19, 2024, Bharat Tex 2024 held at New Delhi from February 26-29, 2024 and 34th Tripura Industries and Commerce Fair 2024, held at Agartala from January 25 to February 11, 2024.
- The Coffee Board, along with 22 coffee exporters/budding entrepreneurs/grower exporters and growers, and the Specialty Coffee Association of India participated in Gulfood 2024 in Dubai from February 19–23, 2024, which is the largest annual food and beverage sourcing event in the world.
- The Coffee Board, with the support of the Consulate General of India, organised the Buyer Seller Meet (BSM) on February 21, 2024 in Dubai. About 50 coffee traders from the UAE attended the BSM. More than 3,000 visitors visited the Coffee Board pavilion during the event, with exporters getting lucrative new business opportunities during the event.
- The Rubber Board organised the seventh edition of the biennial event India Rubber Meet 2024 (IRM 2024) at Guwahati, Assam on February 23-24, 2024. The theme was “Natural Rubber – Changing Landscape Emerging Trends and Insights for Tomorrow”, which addressed the challenges and opportunities of rubber sector. IRM 2024 had a combination of invited talks and panel discussions by internationally renowned experts in the respective fields covering global economic outlook, rubber industry outlook, global and domestic NR scenario, trends in auto and tyre sectors, Recycling of Tyres, insights into international and domestic regulations affecting the sector etc.
- The 7th edition of Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH) was conducted at Kochi from January 29 to February 2, 2024. 109 delegates from 31 countries attended the session. In this session, quality standards for 5 spices, namely small cardamom, turmeric, juniper berry, allspice and star anise were finalized for adoption.
- On the occasion of its 37th Foundation Day on February 26, 2024 Spices Board organized “Clean and safe Spice Campaign 2.0”, to motivate youth to enter into Spices business by facilitating an understanding of the primary spice trade and processing at Spice market Yards/ Spice Parks as well as to enable knowledge sharing with growers from the Spices production hubs on GAP & GHP for ensuring sustainable, quality and safe Spices. The Board conducted campaign at 22 locations ranging from rural villages of Arunachal Pradesh for farmers to students at Spices Park Puttady in Kerala to Traders and youth in Ramganj Mandi Kota , Rajasthan to APMC in Nizamabad and other locations.

## **IX. Export Credit and Insurance**

- During February 2024, ECGC Ltd. has supported exports of Rs 70,979 Crore, earned a premium of Rs 116.68 Crore, issued 1,155 policies, added 2,212 new buyers and settled claims worth Rs 61.86 Crore.

## **X. DGFT**

- The Regional Authorities of DGFT issued 18,225 authorizations and scrips under various FTP schemes, viz., 1,981 under Advance Authorisations, 529 under Service Exports from India's (SEIS), 14,268 under Importers and Exporters Code (IEC) and 1,447 under Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) during February 2024.
- **Addition of Mundra port and ICD Garhi Harsaru for import of new vehicles was notified vide Notification No. 59/2023 dated February 12, 2024:** Mundra port and ICD Garhi Harsaru have been added to the list of existing ports/ICD, thereby taking the total number of ports/ICDs to 18, for importing new vehicles.
- **Extension in import period for yellow peas under ITC (HS) Code 07131010 of Chapter 07 of ITC (HS), 2022, Schedule-I (Import Policy) was notified vide Notification No. 61/2023 dated February 23, 2024:** The import policy of yellow peas under ITC (HS) Code 07131010 is "Free" without the MIP condition and without port restrictions, subject to registration under the Import Monitoring system, and is now allowed for Bill of Landing (Shipped on Board) on or before April 30, 2024.
- **Amendment in Para. 2.39 of the FTP for simplifying the definition of merchanting trade in compliance with the RBI guidelines was notified vide Notification No. 62/2023 dated February 29, 2024:** Merchanting trade carried out within one specific foreign country is permitted, subject to compliance with RBI guidelines, except for goods listed in the CITES Appendices or under SCOMET.
- **Amendment in Para 2.51 of the HBP by adding Adani Gangavaram port to the list of designated ports for the import of metallic waste and scrap was notified vide Public Notice No. 43/2023 dated February 14, 2024:** Import of metallic waste and scrap is now permitted from 11 designated Indian sea ports, including Adani Gangavaram port, from six safe countries/region without PSIC for import of metallic waste and scrap under Para 2.51 of the HBP, 2023.

#### XI. DGTR

- The Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) has issued the final finding in anti-dumping investigation concerning imports of "Pentaerythritol" originating in or exported from China PR, Saudi Arabia and Taiwan on February 20, 2024.
- During the month of February 2024 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/<br>Response | Product                 | Case No   | Issuing Authority | Type of Proceeding                            | Remarks                                                          |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 22/02/2024                      | Stainless Steel Flanges | C-533-878 | USDOC             | CVD Administrative Review (01/01/22-12/31/22) | Filed response to the Initial Questionnaire on behalf of the GOI |

|            |                               |            |                             |                                               |                                                                    |
|------------|-------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 20/02/2024 | Finished Carbon Steel Flanges | C-533-872  | USDOC                       | CVD Administrative Review (01/01/22-12/31/22) | Filed response to the Initial Questionnaire on behalf of the GOI   |
| 13/02/2024 | Granular PTFE Resin           | C-533-900  | USDOC                       | CVD Administrative Review (07/06/21-12/31/22) | Filed response to the Supplementary Questionnaire on behalf of GOI |
| 2/02/2024  | Metformin Hydrochloride       | A.S. 14/23 | Mexican Ministry of Economy | CVD Investigation                             | Anti Subsidy questionnaire on behalf of the GOI                    |

- Issuance of final/provisional findings/disclosure against exports from India:

- The USDOC issued Final Results of Administrative Review of Countervailing Duty on Finished Carbon Steel Flanges from India (C-533-872) for the period January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021 on February 20, 2024. The Final rates of duties are as follows:

| Exporter/Producer                    | Period | Final Rates |
|--------------------------------------|--------|-------------|
| Norma (India) Ltd.                   | 2021   | 2.98%       |
| R.N. Gupta & Co. Ltd.                | 2021   | 3.20%       |
| Non- Selected companies under review | 2021   | 3.09%       |

- The USDOC issued Final Results of Administrative Review of Countervailing Duty on Stainless Steel Flanges from India (C-533-878) for the period January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021 on February 29, 2024. The rates of duties are as follows:

| Exporter/Producer            | Period | Final Rates |
|------------------------------|--------|-------------|
| Chandan Steel Limited        | 2021   | 2.60%       |
| Pradeep Metals Limited       | 2021   | 4.04%       |
| BFN Forgings Private Limited | 2021   | 2.82%       |

## XII. GeM

- GeM has achieved a significant milestone by surpassing a GMV of over INR 3.5 lakh crore with 53 lakh orders in FY 2023–24, as of February 29, 2024. Within the first eleven months of FY 2023–24, the GMV of services has already exceeded INR 1,80,112 crore, surpassing the previous FY GMV of INR 66,159 crore from services.
- The Government e-Marketplace (GeM) introduced a cutting-edge interactive and multilingual learning management system (LMS) featuring certification courses with interactive elements in February 2024. This innovative LMS has been strategically developed to deliver a self-paced and captivating learning experience for buyers, sellers,

and other users. Notably, it stands as one of the pioneering government platforms in the country to provide e-learning content in multiple languages.

- During February 2024, 187 training sessions and 10 events were conducted for various buyer and seller organisations, with a participant count of over 6300 buyers and 3600 sellers. District-level training was launched in Bihar across 9 districts and 2 districts have been covered this month with a participant count of more than 300.

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