

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

Subject: Major Achievements of the Department of Commerce during March 2021

I. Trade Performance

- India's merchandise exports in February 2021 were US\$ 27.93 Billion, as compared to US\$ 27.74 Billion in February 2020, exhibiting a positive growth of 0.67 per cent. In Rupee terms, exports were Rs.2,03,201.56 Crore in February 2021, as compared to Rs.1,98,328.86 Crore in February 2020, registering a positive growth of 2.46 per cent.
- Major commodities/commodity groups, which have recorded positive growth during February, 2021 vis-à-vis February 2020 are Other cereals (546.5%), Oil meals (245.45%), Iron ore (167.79%), Jute mfg. including floor covering (45.53%), Rice (30.78%), Meat, dairy & poultry products (26.43%), Cereal preparations & miscellaneous processed items (25.3%), Carpet (19.46%), Spices (18.61%), Drugs & pharmaceuticals (14.74%), Handicrafts excl. handmade carpet (13.23%) and Ceramic products & glassware (11.04%).
- Exports other than petroleum products and gems & jewellery were USD 22.52 Billion in February 2021, as compared to USD 21.28 Billion in February 2020, registering a positive growth of 5.84 per cent.

II. Export Promotion

- M/s KEC International Ltd (a member company of PEPC) won an order for Rs. 243 Crore in Thailand for supply and construction for expansion of 500/230kV Pluak Daeng substation and improvement of 230kV Rayong 2, 500 kV Chachoengsao 2 and 230kV Ban Khai substations.
- PLEXCONCIL in association with High Commission of India in Canada, Embassy of India in Mexico, Indo – Mexico Chamber of Commerce, ANIPAC – Mexico Largest Chamber of Commerce and Chemistry Industry Association of Canada organized Plexconnect Virtual B2B Meet with Mexico & Canada on 15th March, 2021 which was attended by 12 exhibitors and 51 buyers.

- EEPIC India in partnership with Embassy of India, Doha and IBPC organized a Virtual Interactive session on India-Qatar trade in Engineering & Allied Sectors on 6th March 2021 for enhancing bilateral trade and enlightens the audience about the existing and future opportunities of trade and investment in the engineering sector between the two countries.

III. MPEDA

- MPEDA has released financial assistance of Rs. 4.86 Crore to 9 establishments for Processing and Infrastructure Value Addition, under its various sub-schemes during March 2021. MPEDA has also released financial assistance of approx. Rs. 70.42 lakh to 7 societies in Tamil Nadu & Andhra Pradesh for biosecurity, Generators, Aerators etc. Further, NaCSA has established 10 Aqua One Centre's (3 under SC/ST category & 7 under general category) during March 2021.
- NaCSA (Society under MPEDA) conducted 83 General meetings, wherein 844 farmers attended for Aquaculture farmers to create awareness on Better Management Practices (BMP) in Aquaculture in Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Karnataka and Kerala and an amount of Rs.1,81,945 was collected through various quality testing methods of water quality & aquaculture produces during March 2021. MPEDA has registered 5 new exporters, 3 processing plants, 3 handling facilities, 2 fresh/chilled fish handling centres, 1 dried/ saltish fish handling Centre, 2 storages, 6 conveyance and 2 peeling sheds during March 2021. MPEDA issued 1336 DS-2031 certificates to USA, 668 Catch certificates to EU, 34 Catch certificates for Non- EU, 67 ICCAT documents, 21 Non-Radio Activity certificates and 03 RCMC(Temporary) certificates during March 2021.

IV. Promotion of Plantation Sector

Tea Sector

- The Tea Board conducted a pilot run of the auction platform based on Japanese auction model at Coonoor, Coimbatore and Tea Serve auction centres on 3rd March, 2021.
- Tea auction prices during March 2021 have shown an increase of Rs. 53.13 per Kg (58%) at Rs. 144.74 per Kg as against Rs. 91.61 per Kg in the same period last year.

Coffee Sector

- The Coffee Board has issued permits to export a quantity of 40849 MT of coffee valued at Rs.721.37 Crore during March 2021 which is an increase in export earnings of 23.01% in USD terms.
- In order to minimize regulatory compliances, the Coffee Board has increased periodicity of renewal of RCMC certificate from 3 years to 5 years as per Foreign Trade Policy and has extended the validity period of export permit (Form C) from 30 days to 60 days.

Rubber Sector

- The Rubber Board conducted mass contact programs with a theme “Self-Tapping for Viable Rubber Production in Small Holdings” to promote self-tapping so as to make rubber cultivation as a sustainable enterprise.
- Executive Director of Rubber Board inaugurated nodal project of “Rubber Farm Tourism” in Central Experiment Station of the Board at Chethackal on 23rd March 2021 to promote rubber farm tourism.
- The Rubber Board conducted forty-two online/in-house training programs and two certificate courses benefiting 702 participants from various stakeholders of rubber industry during March, 2021.
- Rubber Research Institute of India (RRII) of the Rubber Board conducted reverse engineering and reconstruction of formula for five various rubber products (latex compound for lining material, adhesive, bonding gum compounds, etc.) during March 2021.

Spices Sector

- The Spice Board sold a quantity of 1736 MT of cardamom (small) through auction at an average price of Rs.1375.70 per kg during March 2021.
- The Spice board disbursed a total amount of Rs.6.89 Crore under various schemes of the Board, benefiting 6441 spice farmers in the North East region.

V. Export Credit, Insurance and MAI Assistance

- Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India (ECGC) has supported exports of Rs. 81,135 Crore, earned a premium of Rs. 146 Crore, issued 1,294 policies, added 1,321 new buyers and settled claims worth Rs. 215.78 Crore during March 2021.
- Under National Export Insurance Account, during March 2021, value of exports supported was Rs. 344.56 Crore and value of insurance cover worth Rs. 286.76 Crore were issued.
- An amount of Rs. 23.69 Crore was released during March 2021 to export promotion councils and trade bodies for undertaking export promotion activities under MAI Scheme.

VI. Bilateral Trade

- During the recent visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India to Bangladesh from 26th to 27th March, 2021, three Borders Haats i.e., Nalikata, Ryngku and Bholaganj (all in State of Meghalaya) between India and Bangladesh have been inaugurated. During the visit, an MoU between the Director General of Trade Remedies, India and the Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission, Bangladesh on the establishment of a framework of cooperation in the area of trade remedial measures was also signed.
- The Department of Commerce has approved initial offer of Goods to Chile for 2nd expansion of India-Chile PTA. India and Chile have exchanged the initial offer on 31st March 2021. The Department of Commerce has also approved the draft protocol for the establishment of the India-Costa Rica Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) which has been sent to the Ministry of External Affairs and EOI for Costa Rica with the request to share the Protocol on JETCO to concerned authorities in Costa Rica so that the Protocol may be signed by both the countries.
- FT(Europe) Division of DoC organized a bilateral meeting between Commerce Secretary and UK Prime Minister's Sherpas on 22nd March, 2021 to discuss launch of enhanced trade partnership and deliverables for the 'mini-deals' during the visit of UK Prime Minister to India beginning 26th April 2021. The Indian side is actively engaged with UK side to finalize deliverables for the visit. Subsequently, a Ministerial interaction between HCIM and UK SoS Truss was held on 26th March 2021 to discuss and finalize the deliverables for the ETP, including announcement of possible market access package during the UK PM's visit in April 2021.

VII. DGFT

- Regional Authorities of DGFT have issued 17,241 Authorizations/Scripts under FTP Schemes, i.e., Importers/Exporters Code (IEC), Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS), Service Exports from India (SEIS), Advance Authorizations and Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) during March 2021.
- DGFT has launched Online Module for Adjudication, Appeal, Review proceedings under Foreign Trade (Development & Regulation) Act, 1992, (the Act), as amended and Rules made thereunder vide Trade Notice No.44/2015-20 dated 01.03.2021. DGFT has also introduced a new online module for filing of electronic paperless applications for import authorizations vide trade notice No. 47/2020-21 dated 23.03.2021. Further, DGFT has extended the existing Foreign Trade Policy 2015-20 upto 30.09.2021, which was earlier valid upto 31.03.2021.

VIII. Government e-Marketplace (GeM)

- Total transaction value on GeM portal has crossed Rs. 1,16,478 Crore and 6,84,878 MSEs vendors have been registered on GeM Portal as on 31st March, 2021.
- GeM has provided online training to 10,630 users (8,356 buyers & 2,274 sellers) (due to COVID-19) for capacity building in the month of March 2021.
- GeM held 16 webinars exclusively for MSMEs / Start-Ups / Artisans / Weavers / SHGs for capacity building and on-boarding on GeM benefiting 585 participants.
- In order to on-board sellers including MSMEs, SHGs, women entrepreneurs, artisans, etc. on GeM portal, GeM had created a seller invitation module through which 17,523 sellers have been invited and 7665 sellers have registered.
- GeM has made 30,895 sellers in COVID-19 medical categories & 33,805 sellers in COVID-19 auxiliaries' categories available on the portal.
- GeM signed Memorandum of Understanding for faster adoption and procurement of goods and services through GeM portal between GeM and KOICL Limited.
- For faster and transparent procurement to fight COVID-19, GeM has made available 295 COVID-19 related categories (Medical and auxiliaries) with 1,48,921 unique products in COVID-19 in medical categories and 1,27,623 unique products in auxiliaries' categories.
