

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 January 2021

I. Trade Performance

• India's merchandise exports in December 2020 were US\$ 27.15 billion, as compared to US\$ 27.11 billion in December 2019, exhibiting a positive growth of 0.14 per cent. In Rupee terms, exports were Rs. 1,99,770.58 crore in December 2020, as compared to Rs. 1,92,984.47 crore in December 2019, registering a positive growth of 3.52 per cent.

• Major commodities/commodity groups, which have recorded positive growth of more than 10 per cent in exports during December 2020 vis-à-vis December 2019 are Other cereals (278.23%), Oil Meals (196.92%), Iron Ore (69.26%), Cereal preparations & miscellaneous processed items (47.14%), Jute Mfg. including Floor Covering (21.93%), Handicrafts excl. handmade carpet (21.78%), Carpet (21.17%), Ceramic products & glassware (19.56%), Drugs & Pharmaceuticals (17.47%), Spices (17.3%), Electronic Goods (16.51%), Fruits & Vegetables (14.88%), Organic & Inorganic Chemicals (10.79%), Rice (10.76%), Mica, Coal & Other Ores, Minerals including processed minerals (10.76%) & Cotton Yarn/Fabs./made-ups and Handloom Products (10.35%).

• Exports other than petroleum products and Gems & jewellery were US\$ 22.22 billion in December 2020, as compared to US\$ 21.06 billion in December 2019, registering a positive growth of 5.50 per cent.

II. Export Promotion

• The Power Transmission & Distribution Business of Larsen & Toubro (a member company of PEPC) won (i) a slew of Transmission Line orders in Bangladesh valuing Rs. 2500-5000 crores (ii) an Engineering, Procurement, Construction and Commissioning (EPCC) contract to construct a 500kV Transmission Line in Malaysia that comes at the heels of the successful completion of a similar 500kV project in West Malaysia, and (iii) two Transmission Line packages in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia involving Design, Procurement and Construction of 380kV Double Circuit Overhead Transmission Line Corridors for a length of more than 650 KM during January 2021.

• Joint Venture of Kalpataru Power Transmission Limited (Kalpataru), India and Bin Omairah, Saudi Arabia signed a contract with Saudi Electricity Company (SEC) in January, 2021 for the construction of 380Kv D/C OHTL with a contract value of SAR 234,112,485 (US\$ 62,429,996) between the existing Yanbu City (YCNT) 380/110kV BSP and existing Umlujj North (UMN) 380/132kV BSP.

- Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESCEPC) jointly with the Embassy of India in USA, Minority Business Development Agency, US Department of Commerce and US India SME Council organized a Business Networking meet on 14.01.2021 wherein ESC and USISME Council signed an MoU for cooperation in ICT sector.

III. Promotion of Plantation Sector

Tea Sector

- Tea Board denatured 64074.99 kgs of tea waste during January 2021 which will help in restricting adulteration in Tea.

Coffee Sector

- Research and Extension divisions of the Coffee Board conducted 37 webinars / capacity building programmes on different aspects of coffee cultivation benefiting about 950 coffee growers across the coffee growing regions of the country during January 2021. The Board also disbursed Rs 90.23 lakhs as transit freight assistance to Indian exporters and Rs 209.64 lakhs towards coffee developmental activities.

Rubber Sector

- The Rubber Board, as part of a target to conduct 2,000 campaigns with a participation of 40,000 growers, organized 301 campaign meetings benefiting 7,140 rubber growers in January 2021. Under farmer education programmes, the Board conducted 212 trainings on Tapping, Beekeeping, LFT & CUT (Low Frequency Tapping & Control Upward Tapping), Mushroom culture, etc, benefited 3,177 farmers and also organized 254 batches of field training on different topics benefiting 3,075 farmers in January 2021.

- The Rubber Board, under the convergence with MGNREGS, completed the cultural operations in 1,009 ha of rubber plantations benefiting 1,982 rubber growers during January 2021.

Spices Sector

- The Spices Board, with a view to focus on small cardamom, organized an online buyer-seller meet on 22.01.2021 which was attended by around 150 sellers/producers representing progressive farmer's/farmer's societies from Kerala and Tamil Nadu, including cardamom growers whose samples are found to be in compliance with the pesticide levels prescribed by Saudi Arabia. The Spices Board also organised a buyer-seller meet for Chilli and Turmeric with focus on Andhra Pradesh on 29.01.2021 in which 200 sellers/producers and exporters from across India participated.

- The Spices Board issued 71 Certificates of Registration as Exporter of Spices (CRES), 6 Cardamom Dealer License, 297 health certificates to the exporters and 2,363 analytical reports during January 2021.

- The Quality Evaluation Laboratories of the Spices Board tested 8,531 parameters out of 4,966 samples received during January 2021.

IV. Export Credit, Insurance and MAI Assistance

- During January 2021, Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India (ECGC) has supported exports of Rs 49,322 crore, earned a premium of Rs 88 crore, issued 993 policies, added 926 new buyers and settled claims worth Rs 206.05 crore.
- Under National Export Insurance Account, during January 2021, value of exports supported was Rs 906.64 crore and value of insurance cover worth Rs 578.87 crore were issued.

V. Bilateral Trade

- In view of the increased bilateral trade interest between India and Indonesia, two Joint Working Groups on Trade & Investment (WGTI) and Trade Facilitation & Resolution (WGTFR) have been set up by both countries in January 2021 for regular discussion on trade and investment matters with the objective of enhancing economic partnership. This is a good development as India maintains bilateral trade deficit with Indonesia on account of the substantial import of fuel and palm oil and the Joint Working Groups are expected to facilitate increased exports of India to Indonesia to address the trade imbalance.
- A virtual meeting was held on 8.01.2021 on renewal of 'Long Term Agreements for supply of Iron Ore to Japan and South Korea', with Hon'ble Minister for Commerce & Industry, Hon'ble Minister of External Affairs, Hon'ble Minister of Steel, Hon'ble MoS (C&I) and senior officials from the Ministries of Steel, Mines, Railways, MEA, Commerce & Industry, MMTC and NMDC. During the meeting, it was decided to not extend the Long-Term Agreement for export of iron ore to Japan and South Korea beyond 31.03.2021, as there is a need to prioritize the development of the domestic steel industry.

VI. DGFT

- Regional Authorities of DGFT have issued 13,865 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 the month of January, 2021.
- DGFT, as part of IT Revamp of the Organization, has introduced a new module (online e-PRC System) for seeking policy/procedure relaxation in terms of Para 2.58 of FTP from 25.01.2021 onwards vide Trade Notice No. 38/2020-2021 dated 15.01.2021.
- DGFT has removed the ban from import of reptile leathers and fox, mink and Chinchilla fur skins vide notification no. 55 dated 07.01.2021. This ban was imposed on 03.01.2017 for which number of representations requesting for its removal were received as these items are extensively used as trimmings in leather garments and also in handbags and in purses etc and the ban has adversely affected the growth of fur skin product manufacture in the country as substantial value addition takes place in India.

VII. Government e-Marketplace (GeM)

- Total transaction value on GeM portal has crossed Rs. 83,742 crore as on 31.01.2021. There are 5,05,621 MSEs vendors registered on GeM Portal as on 31.01.2021.

- 13,105 product categories and 178 service categories have been created till January, 2021.
- A total of 12,565 users (8,779 buyers & 3,786 sellers) have been provided online training (due to COVID-19) for capacity building in the month of January 2021.
- A total of 75 webinars were held exclusively for MSMEs/ START-UPs/ Artisans/ Weavers/ SHGs for capacity building and on-boarding on GeM, benefiting 2,961 participants in association with National Health Mission, ONGC, CRPF, Taxes and Excise Department, High Court, Governor Secretariat, Fisheries Department and Traffic Police Department during January 2021.
- 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 15,966 sellers have been invited out of which 7020 sellers have registered.
- 1,48,000 weavers and 27,500 artisans registered as sellers on GeM with the assistance of 28 Weaver Service Centres and 56 Handicraft Service Centres at Ministry of Textiles and 3,21,000 MSMEs registered with Udyam Registration Portal have been successfully on-boarded on GeM as sellers.
- GeM signed a Memorandum of Association with IIT Roorkee, IIT Jammu, IIT Bhilai, NALCO & Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited.
- For faster, transparent procurement to fight COVID-19, GeM has made available 295 COVID-19 related categories (Medical and auxiliaries) with 1,27,963 unique products in covid-19 in medical categories and 1,26,152 unique products in auxiliaries' categories.
- A new page for tracking of COVID-19 categories and the number of sellers has been created.
