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FIEO NEWS

Rs 70



UPITS is not just a Trade Show, But a manifestation of the Prime Minister's vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' and 'Make in India, Make for the World.'

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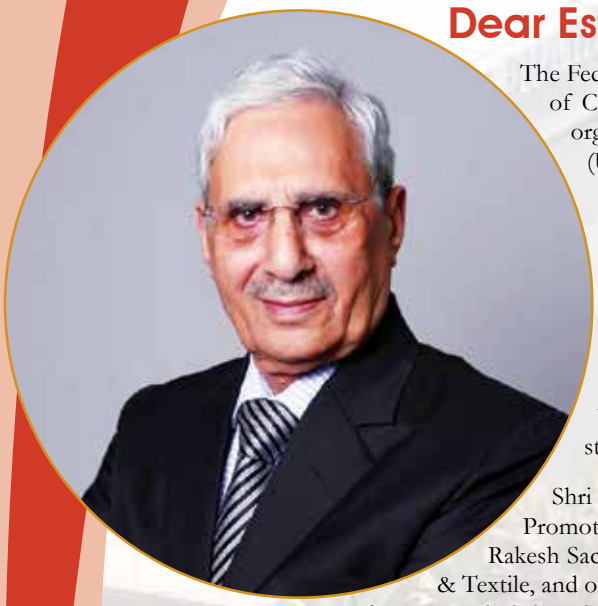


Dear Esteemed Exporters,

The Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), with the support of the Department of Commerce, Government of India, and the Government of Uttar Pradesh, successfully organised a Buyer-Seller Meet during the 3rd Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS 2025), held from 25–29 September 2025 at the India Expo Centre & Mart, Greater Noida. The event brought together over 2,500 exhibitors and more than 500 international buyers from 85+ countries, creating a dynamic platform to globally promote Uttar Pradesh's products—particularly under the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme.

The mega trade show was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, who commended Uttar Pradesh's rapid development and rising export potential. During the inauguration, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Yogi Adityanath, emphasised the event's role as a global platform to showcase the state's industrial growth, traditional enterprises, and rich cultural heritage.

Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi", Hon'ble Minister for Industrial Development, Export Promotion, NRI & Investment Promotion, Government of Uttar Pradesh, along with Shri Rakesh Sachan, Hon'ble Minister for MSME, Khadi & Village Industries, Sericulture, Handloom & Textile, and other key dignitaries, inaugurated the largest-ever B2B sessions between overseas buyers and Uttar Pradesh-based exporters, organised by FIEO. They also interacted with several international buyers. Shri Rakesh Sachan acknowledged the strong interest in 'Made in UP' products, especially those under the ODOP initiative and with Geographical Indication (GI) tags. He highlighted the event's significance in offering global exposure to these products, aligning with the state government's vision of expanding their footprint in international markets. The B2B sessions facilitated by FIEO enabled direct engagement between overseas buyers and local exporters, thereby supporting the vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' and 'Make in India, Make for the World.'

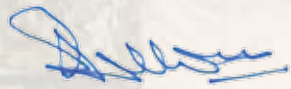
In its continued efforts to promote India's trade potential, the Federation also organised several key initiatives, including awareness sessions on the soon-to-be-implemented and widely anticipated India–UK Comprehensive Economic & Trade Agreement, and the SheTrades India Hub programme aimed at promoting women entrepreneurship in exports across the country. Furthermore, FIEO led multiple trade delegations to partner countries such as Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Jordan, and Bahrain to foster bilateral trade and investment opportunities in several key sectors.

Friends, I would also like to extend a warm welcome to our three newly elected Managing Committee Members and Regional Chairmen: Mr Arvind Goenka as Regional Chairman (Northern Region); Mr Khushwant Jain as Regional Chairman (Western Region); and Mr Abhishek Poddar, also as Regional Chairman (Western Region). I wish them great success in steering FIEO towards new milestones and achievements, especially during this Diamond Jubilee Celebration Year of the Federation.

In this month's issue of FIEO News, we are pleased to present a special feature on "India–Netherlands Trade and Investment Opportunities," which includes valuable insights from Shri Kumar Tuhin, Ambassador of India to the Netherlands (The Hague).

India's foreign trade data for August 2025 continues to reflect resilience. Exports rose to USD 69.16 billion, compared to USD 63.25 billion in August 2024. Cumulative exports for the April–August 2025–26 period stood at USD 349.35 billion, surpassing USD 329.03 billion recorded during the same period last year. Imports for August 2025 reached USD 79.04 billion, resulting in a trade deficit of USD 9.88 billion. Meanwhile, cumulative imports during April–August 2025–26 climbed to USD 390.78 billion, up from USD 381.30 billion in the corresponding period of FY 2024–25.

Looking ahead, FIEO urges the government to maintain sustained efforts in the coming months to build on this momentum. To maintain and accelerate export growth, we must continue to focus on ease of doing business, faster trade facilitation, skilling, and enhanced access to global markets. We also appeal for stronger support mechanisms for MSMEs and timely disbursement of export-related incentives to ensure our exporters remain globally competitive—especially in these challenging times, when major global economies are grappling with tariff-related crises. FIEO remains optimistic that with a strategic push and stabilisation in global markets, India is well-positioned to further strengthen its trade performance during the remaining fiscal year. ■



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LAST MONTHLY ISSUES











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UPITS 2025-RBSM



Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi; Hon'ble CM of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Yogi Adityanath; Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi", Hon'ble Minister for Industrial Development, Export Promotion, NRI & Investment Promotion, Uttar Pradesh; Shri Rakesh Sachan, Hon'ble Minister for MSME, Khadi & Village Industries, Sericulture, Handloom & Textile, Govt of UP, during the inaugural of UPITS 2025

The Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), with the support of Department of Commerce, Government of India and the Govt of Uttar Pradesh organized a Buyer Seller Meet (BSM) during the 3rd edition of Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS 2025) held from September 25-29, 2025 at the India Expo Centre & Mart, Greater Noida, this prestigious event was hosted by the Government of Uttar Pradesh with the goal of showcasing the State's unique products on a global platform and promoting their international outreach.

UPITS 2025 succeeded in creating a robust marketplace, bringing together over 2,500 exhibitors from Uttar Pradesh, who presented a wide range of high-quality products across various sectors. The show attracted more than 520 international buyers from over 85 countries, providing a significant opportunity for manufacturers, traders, and service providers from Uttar Pradesh to engage directly with global stakeholders. The primary objective of this grand event as described by its tag line "Ultimate Sourcing Begins Here" was to position Uttar Pradesh's offerings on a global stage, thus enhancing the export potential of the state's businesses.



Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi addressing the gathering, during the inaugural ceremony of UPITS on September 25, 2025 at IEML, Greater Noida, UP

International participation was diverse and included representatives from various regions, including NAFTA, CIS, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, West Asia, Africa, Europe, Northeast Asia, Latin America, and Oceania. Noteworthy among the participating countries were the Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, United Kingdom, United States, UAE (Dubai), European Union, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Uganda, Lebanon, and many others. The diverse representation underscored the growing global interest in Uttar



On the inaugural day, Shri Arvind Goenka, Regional Chairman (NR), FIEO; Dr Ajay Sahai, DG & CEO, FIEO; and Mr Suvidh Shah, Additional DG, FIEO, called on Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Yogi Adityanath, and presented a memento





L: Hon'ble Ministers Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi" and Shri Rakesh Sachan, inaugurated the B2B sessions with overseas buyers on September 25, 2025. Also present at the event was Dr Ajay Sahai, DG & CEO, FIEO and Mr Rakesh Kumar Chairman IEML. R: Hon'ble Ministers Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi" and Shri Rakesh Sachan, interacting with overseas buyers and UP-based sellers on September 25, 2025

Pradesh's products, particularly those promoted under the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme, which highlights the unique craftsmanship and industries of different districts in the state.

The trade show was inaugurated on September 25, 2025, by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi in the esteemed presence of Shri Yogi Adityanath, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh; Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi", Hon'ble Minister for Industrial Development, Export Promotion, NRI & Investment Promotion, Uttar Pradesh; Shri Rakesh Sachan, Hon'ble Minister for MSME, Khadi & Village Industries, Sericulture, Handloom & Textile, Govt of UP and other distinguished dignitaries.



Foreign Buyers during B2B meetings with Indian exhibitors

In his keynote address, the Prime Minister of India, praised Uttar Pradesh for its rapid development and credited the Chief Minister for his visionary leadership, which has transformed the State into a driving force behind India's economic growth. The PM remarked that for any investor or company seeking to elevate their growth, investing in India presents the most attractive opportunity. He asserted that investing in India, and in Uttar Pradesh in particular, is a win-win situation.



Mr Alok Kumar, Principal Secretary, Govt of UP, interacting with overseas buyers and witnessing MoU signing between foreign buyers and Indian sellers at the FIEO B2B Lounge on September 26, 2025

The Prime Minister concluded by affirming that through collective efforts, a developed India and a developed Uttar Pradesh will be realized. He extended his best wishes to all participants of the International Trade Show.

Shri Yogi Adityanath, during the inaugural event said that this is not just a trade show, but a manifestation of the Prime Minister's vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' and 'Make in India, Make for the World.' Under the guidance of the respected Prime Minister, the industrial revolution in Uttar Pradesh, the revival of traditional enterprises, and the rich cultural heritage and social diversity of the state are being reflected through the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show.

The CM further added that this is an excellent platform to showcase Uttar Pradesh to the country and the world. The Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show has emerged as a global platform to present our achievements to the world."

Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi", said that UP is becoming the poster boy of India's development and progress on the global stage, attracting investments and creating opportunities for its residents. Through the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show, our



Dr Ajay Sahai, DG & CEO, FIEO, during the Russia-India Business Dialogue on September 26, 2025. Also present on the occassion were key dignitaries from the Govt, Embassy of Russia, trade, industry & financial experts

local products are gaining global recognition. More than 500 buyers from 85 countries are witnessing the strength of 'Make in India' and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat.' The participation of a global power like Russia as the Partner Country is truly encouraging. Shri Nandi further added that under one roof, over 2,500 traditional artisans, handicraft workers, women engaged in cottage industries, skilled craftsmen of zari and chikankari, sculptors, and brassware makers from every district of Uttar Pradesh are showcasing their creations. In line with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision, their products are receiving exposure from 'local to global.

In addition to government leaders, Shri Rakesh Sachan, acknowledged the potential of UPITS 2025 to boost various sectors of Uttar Pradesh's economy, including IT, education, e-commerce, and agriculture. He highlighted that our resolve is to transform Uttar Pradesh into an export hub, where our ODOP products are now emerging as strong brands with a distinct identity in global markets. Under the Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana, more than 75,000 artisans have been provided training, while 1.5 lakh individuals have also been trained under the ODOP initiative. Through the 'Vocal for Local' campaign, we are not only strengthening the economy but also empowering our people.

During the inaugural day, Mr Arvind Goenka, Regional Chairman (NR), FIEO; Dr Ajay Sahai, Director General & CEO, FIEO and Mr Suvidh Shah, Additional Director General, FIEO, met with the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, to discuss several initiatives to boost exports from Uttar Pradesh. This meeting underscored FIEO's ongoing commitment to promoting trade and enhancing the export economy through closer collaboration with the state government.

Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi" and Shri Rakesh Sachan, in the presence of Dr Ajay Sahai, inaugurated the B2B sessions between Overseas buyers and UP based exporters, organised by FIEO and interacted with several overseas buyers.

Shri Rakesh Sachan praised the impressive participation and interest in "Made in UP" products, particularly those supported by the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme and Geographical Indication (GI) tags.

He emphasized that the event has provided much-needed exposure to products that have significant global potential, especially with the strategic focus of the Uttar Pradesh government on scaling these products to international markets. He further reaffirmed the government's vision of making Uttar Pradesh a USD 1 trillion economy, aligning with the Chief Minister's long-term goals.



Mr Suvidh Shah, Additional DG, FIEO; Ms Shubhra Jain, Lead – Exports Policy, Amazon India; Mr Rishabh Agrawal, SVP, Credlix; Mr Amit Kumar, DGM & Regional Manager – Northern Region, ECGC Ltd.; Mr Raj Kamal Yadav, Additional Commissioner of Industries & MD, UPSIC, Govt of UP; Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi", Hon'ble Minister, Industrial Development, Export Promotion, NRI & Investment Promotion, Govt of UP; and Mr Khalid M Khan, Former VP, FIEO, along with other FIEO officials, seen during the knowledge session on "E-commerce: The New Frontier for Indian Exports" at UPITS 2025 on September 27, 2025



Mr Deepak Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance, Institutional Finance & External Aided Project, Government of Uttar Pradesh, visiting UPITS 2025 to observe and support the ongoing FIEO-organized B2B meetings at UPITS 2025 on September 27, 2025

Day 2 of the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS) 2025 saw a significant increase in attendance, affirming the event's importance in the business and trade landscape of Uttar Pradesh. The event continued to build momentum, offering a grand platform for showcasing the best of Uttar Pradesh's products and services.

On the 2nd day of UPITS 2025, Mr Alok Kumar, Principal Secretary, Govt of UP along with Shri Raj Kamal Yadav, Additional Commissioner of Industries & MD, UPSIC, Govt of UP also visited FIEO B2B Lounge and interacted with overseas buyers and also appreciated the ongoing B2B meetings. Mr Kumar said that the objective of the 3rd edition of the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS) is to connect the state's products with international buyers and expand their reach in global markets.

He commended the FIEO for its excellent work in facilitating these linkages. He further noted that, compared to the previous edition, this year's trade show has achieved significantly higher export orders, crossing Rs. 2,000 Crores, reflecting the growing global demand for Uttar Pradesh's products.

A major highlight of the day was the Russia-India Business Dialogue, hosted by the event's Partner Country, Russia.

The session began with welcome remarks by Mr Alok Kumar, followed by a short film by Invest UP. Ms Zlata Antusheva, Deputy Head of the Economic Department, Trade Representation of Russia in India, moderated the dialogue, which featured opening remarks from Dr Evgeny Zenchenko, Deputy Trade Commissioner of Russia in India, and a presentation from the Russian Export Centre.

Key business and trade bodies including PHD Chamber of Commerce & Industry and FIEO highlighted export potential in sectors such as textiles, agro-products, leather, engineering, and handicrafts. During the Business Dialogue, Dr Ajay Sahai, underscored Uttar Pradesh's growing role as a major contributor to India–Russia trade relations.

He emphasized that Uttar Pradesh, with its rich industrial base and traditional strengths, has the potential to emerge as a major driver of bilateral trade between India and Russia. The high-level dialogue served as an important step towards expanding business linkages, unlocking new opportunities, and furthering the global reach of Uttar Pradesh's exports.

Financial institutions such as Sberbank India, SIDBI, and Punjab National Bank, along with insurance majors like Ingosstrakh, National Insurance Company, and Axis Max Life, shared perspectives on enabling smoother trade and investment flows. The session also showcased educational collaborations through presentations by Synergy Group of Companies and Indian universities including Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Technical University, Sharda University, and Galgotias University.

Shri Rakesh Sachan delivered the keynote address, emphasizing opportunities for artisans, MSMEs, and traditional industries in accessing global markets. The B2B meetings held throughout the day proved to be highly productive, with participants engaging in valuable discussions that could potentially lead to long-term partnerships and new opportunities. The meetings facilitated direct connections between buyers and sellers, allowing exhibitors from Uttar Pradesh to demonstrate their products to a global audience.



Mr Ranjan Kumar, Principal Secretary, Government of UP, visiting FIEO's Overseas Buyers B2B Lounge and interacting with overseas buyers and Indian exporters on September 28, 2025, during UPITS 2025

FIEO successfully organized a knowledge session titled "E-commerce: The New Frontier for Indian Exports" on the third day of the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS). The session, held in collaboration with the UPSIC, RAMP, and the Uttar Pradesh Government, provided a comprehensive platform for Indian exporters to gain valuable insights and strategies to expand their reach in the global market.



Mr Suvidh Shah, Additional DG, FIEO, receiving the Best Supporting Organization award from Hon'ble Minister Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi" during UPITS 2025 on September 28, 2025. Also seen are Shri Rakesh Sachan, Hon'ble Minister, MSME, Khadi & Village Industries, Sericulture, Handloom & Textile, Govt of UP; Mr Alok Kumar, Principal Secretary, Govt of UP; Mr Raj Kamal Yadav, MD, UPSIC; and other esteemed dignitaries

The session commenced with a welcome address by Mr Suvidh Shah. Industry perspectives were shared by Ms Shubhra Jain, Lead – Exports Policy, Amazon India, and Mr Rishabh Agrawal, Senior Vice President, Credlix, emphasizing technology-driven trade and financing solutions. Mr Amit Kumar, DGM & Regional Manager (North), ECGC Ltd., addressed risk coverage and insurance support for e-commerce exporters. Government perspectives were presented by Mr Raj Kamal Yadav, Additional Commissioner of Industries & MD UPSIC, spoke on enabling policies and support systems for digital trade.

Shri Rakesh Sachan, underscored the importance of e-commerce in empowering artisans and MSMEs to access global markets. The keynote address was delivered by Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi," who emphasized Uttar Pradesh's vision to integrate local industries with international e-commerce opportunities. The session concluded with a vote of thanks by Mr Khalid M Khan, Former Vice President, FIEO.

Mr Deepak Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance, Institutional Finance & External Aided Project, Government of Uttar Pradesh, visited the 3rd Edition of the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS 2025) to observe and extend support to the ongoing B2B meetings organized by FIEO.

During his visit, he engaged with key stakeholders and witnessed the robust participation of Uttar Pradesh's industries and MSMEs. He highlighted the strength and diversity of the state's trade and export ecosystem, underscoring its growing global competitiveness.

On September 28, 2025, the 4th day of UPITS 2025, Mr Ranjan Kumar, Principal Secretary, Government of UP visited the FIEO'S Overseas Buyers B2B Lounge and interacted with several Overseas Buyers and Indian Exporters. He appreciated FIEO for the efforts done in organising focused B2B meetings and also assured all the support to FIEO in forthcoming editions of UPITS.



Shri Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, at the valedictory session of UPITS 2025 on September 29, 2025, as Chief Guest. Also seen are Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi", Shri Rakesh Sachan, Mr Alok Kumar, Mr K Vijayendra Pandian, Mr Raj Kamal Yadav, and Dr Ajay Sahai

The fourth day of the UPITS marked a historic milestone, shattering previous attendance records and showcasing the state's burgeoning trade potential. The event attracted a massive footfall of both B2B and B2C buyers, with significant

Continued on Page 12

Mr Arvind Goenka appointed Regional Chairman (NR), FIEO

Mr Arvind Goenka, aged 55 years, is Managing Director of RMG Polyvinyl India Limited, a Star Export House, manufacturing PVC Floorings under the brand WONDERFLOOR. He has been associated with PLEXCONCIL as Chairman and during his tenure plastics exports touched all time high of 13 Bn US$.

To contribute to export growth and help exporters in other sectors, Mr Goenka is contesting elections at FIEO, a premier export promotion council under the Ministry of Commerce & industry, Govt of India and seeks your support. His aim is to identify issues which can make value added exports competitive and encourage non exporters to enter in exports.

Mr Goenka's Associations with Industry bodies:

- Panel Chairman at PLEXCONCIL Since 2022
- Managing committee member at Plastindia Foundation 2021-2023
- Managing committee member at FIEO 2021-2022
- Managing Committee member at Conf. of Footwear Industy (CIFI) currently.
- Member of Bureau of Indian Standards – CED05 Flooring, Wall Finishing & Roofing



- Represented Plastic associations like All India Plastics Manufacturers Association (AIPMA) and Organization of Plastic Processors of India (OPPI) at DCPC, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers at several stakeholder meetings.
- Held post of Vice Chairman & Regional Chairman (North) at PLEXCONCIL in past.

Key issues taken up in past on behalf of Industry:

- Pushed for preferential treatment for plastics exports under UAE FTA.
- Pushed for reduction in import duty on PVC resin, a key plastic polymer.
- Pushed for increase in the custom duties of plastics goods and and got partial success in products like PVC floorings, PVC Flex, etc to safeguard the domestic producers.
- Represented Plastics industry at DGTR at several occasions to thwart tariff barriers of Plastic Raw materials.
- Represented at Bureau of Indian Standards for QCO on value added plastics.
- Represented FIEO at Parliamentary Standing committee on Commerce on various occasions to raise issues faced by exporters.

Business Background:

Mr Goenka's business is manufacturing & export of PVC Floorings, PVC Geomembranes & PVC leather Cloth. His company is winner of Top Export Award for PVC Floorings from PLEXCONCIL from past 18 years in a row.

The company's turnover is in excess of 550 Cr and supplies are made to Indian railways, Automotive industry, Health care & education sectors and in infrastructure projects like tunneling. ■

Mr Khushwant Jain appointed Regional Chairman (WR), FIEO

Mr Khushwant Jain is the Owner of G.S. Exports and a veteran in India's agricultural exports, with over 33 years of experience in the trade of Oilseeds, Spices, Raisins, Pulses & other Agri Commodities.

A Commerce Graduate, Mr Jain joined his family's trading business at the age of 19 and, by 21, established his own manufacturing and Export company. Under his leadership, G.S. Exports has grown into one of India's most reputed "Three Star Export house".

In 1999, the company became the Highest Exporter of Peanuts from India, a position it has consistently maintained. Over the years, it has expanded its reach to dominate Indian exports of a wide range of agricultural commodities.



The company has been consistently recognized since 1998 by Export Promotion Councils, Government Boards & State Govt.'s for its outstanding performance.

Among its many accolades, the most distinguished is the "NIRYAT SHREE" Gold Trophy, awarded by the Hon'ble President of India, Late Shri Pranab Mukherjee, for being the highest exporter of agricultural products in the MSME category.

Beyond his entrepreneurial achievements, Mr Jain has also contributed significantly to the Indian export fraternity. He is the Past Chairman of the Indian Oilseeds & Produce Export Promotion Council (IOPEPC) (under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India) and currently serves as Director and Convener – Groundnut and Groundnut Oil Panel.

With his deep expertise, leadership, and vision, Mr Jain continues to be a strong advocate for Indian exports, supporting the trade and industry with his vast experience. ■

Mr Abhishek Poddar appointed Regional Chairman (ER), FIEO

Federation of Indian Export Organisations is pleased to inform that Mr Abhishek Poddar has been elected as the Regional Chairman (ER) of FIEO.



Mr Abhishek Poddar is the Director and Co-Founder of Ganges Jute Private Limited, one of India's largest producer and exporter of jute and diversified jute products. Acclaimed for maintaining global standards in quality and ethical sourcing, Ganges Jute Private Limited is a recognized Three Star Export House status holder and T3 AEO Certified organisation. Under his able leadership, Ganges Jute has leapfrogged and is currently exporting to more than 50 countries.

A consistent performer, the company has been recognized by Ministry of Textiles time and again as a top exporter and is aligned with the global sustainability standards having Fair Trade, GOTS, OCS, Global Recycled Standard and Better Cotton Initiative Certifications, ensuring sustainable sourcing and traceability.

A forward-looking industrialist who has philanthropy in his heart and a fitness enthusiast to the core, Mr Poddar is a well- known name for his commitment to excellence. With an impressive track record of leadership, Mr Abhishek Poddar is the member of the advisory committee for the Indian Jute Industries' Research Association (IJIRA) and Technical Working Group on Mineral Oil Hydrocarbon (MOH) Contamination in Cocoa in Brussels.

Mr Abhishek Poddar has a distinguished and diverse academic background which has shaped his professional journey. From St. Xavier's College, Kolkata to Symbiosis Centre for Management and HRD, and London School of Economics, the evolving path and experience has enriched and deepened his understanding of industry, innovation and leadership. ■

Continued from Page 10

business transactions reported throughout the day.

The fourth day was marked by a closing session attended by distinguished dignitaries, including Shri Rakesh Sachan; Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi", Mr Raj Kamal Yadav, and Mr Rakesh Kumar, Chairman, India Expo Centre & Mart. During the session, awards were presented to outstanding exhibitors and talented students, celebrating excellence in participation and innovation.

A special recognition was awarded to the FIEO, which was honoured as the Best Supporting Organization during the 3rd Edition of UPITS 2025. This accolade was presented by Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi", in the presence of other esteemed dignitaries, further solidifying FIEO's role in facilitating international trade.

The day's proceedings were significantly enhanced by the presence of Shri Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, who attended the valedictory session as the Chief Guest on 29th September, 2025. He was joined by distinguished dignitaries, including Shri Nand Gopal Gupta "Nandi"; Shri Rakesh Sachan; Mr Alok Kumar; Shri K. Vijayendra Pandian, Commissioner & Director of Industries, Government of Uttar Pradesh; Mr Raj Kamal Yadav, and Dr Ajay Sahai, DG & CEO, FIEO.

Shri Goyal congratulated the Government of Uttar Pradesh for the successful organization of UPITS and highlighted how the event reflects not only the economic, industrial, and cultural strength of the state but also of India as a whole. He urged stakeholders to promote indigenous products and collectively work towards the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

In his address, Shri Goyal emphasized the remarkable transformation of Uttar Pradesh in recent years under the leadership of the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister. He described the State as being on an "unstoppable runway" with a secure investment climate and robust infrastructure, making it the preferred destination for investors.

Calling UPITS a unique convergence of government, industry, MSMEs, women entrepreneurs, and startups, he underlined that this perfect blend is the real secret behind Uttar Pradesh's growth journey. He also referred to the recently announced GST Bachat Utsav, terming it one of the most significant reforms since independence, set to benefit consumers for decades to come.

Shri Goyal noted India's rise as the world's fourth-largest economy and its strengthening global identity, with developed nations eager to sign Free Trade Agreements with India.

He also highlighted the success of the ODOP initiative, which has provided global recognition to more than 1,200 products across 750 districts in the country, and announced the establishment of Unity Malls in Lucknow, Agra, and Varanasi to showcase ODOP products.

He praised Uttar Pradesh's rapid industrial growth, with over 3,000 new units expected to be set up this year alone, attributing this success to the state's strong governance and improved law and order. The Minister concluded by calling upon all participants to adopt indigenous products, support ODOP, and contribute to building a self-reliant and developed India by 2047.

The 3rd edition of the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS) concluded on a high note after five remarkable days, showcasing a vibrant tapestry of innovation, business opportunities, and collaborative spirit. The event has proven to be a transformative platform for exhibitors, buyers, and visitors alike, garnering overwhelmingly positive feedback across diverse sectors. ■

CETA-Providing Bilateral Trade Boost



Dr Ajay Sahai, DG & CEO, FIEO addressing the participants

> Tariff cuts of 4%–18% across sectors will give Indian exporters a sharper edge, particularly in marine products where India's share is just 2.25% of the UK's US$ 5.4 billion market.

Ms Vrunda Manohar Desai, Additional DGFT–CLA, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, has hailed CETA as a landmark pact uniting the world's fourth and sixth largest economies in a partnership poised to reshape trade and investment for decades. She has noted that the agreement follows the Enhanced Trade Partnership of May 2021 and reflects the vision articulated at the G20 Summit in Rio in 2024, culminating in its signing on 24 July 2025. Citing both leaders, she recalled Prime Minister Narendra Modi calling the pact "historic" while UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer described it as "a new era for trade and the economy." She made her observations at a virtual session organised by FIEO on September 16, 2025 to deliberate on the potential of the recently concluded India–UK Comprehensive Economic & Trade Agreement (CETA). The event brought together senior officials, trade experts, and industry leaders to spotlight new opportunities for Indian exporters across goods and services.

> CETA is a landmark pact uniting the world's fourth and sixth largest economies in a partnership that will reshape trade and investment.



Ms Vrunda Manohar Desai, Additional DGFT–CLA, New Delhi delivering keynote address

Further, Ms Desai underscored the scope of tariff liberalisation under CETA, with India securing zero or reduced tariffs on 99% of exports to the UK. Textiles, leather, footwear, gems, auto parts, toys, marine products, and processed food will gain substantially. Agriculture too sees a major breakthrough, with 95% of tariff lines duty-free, boosting basmati rice, spices, tea, and seafood. She also noted provisions on mobility, procurement, intellectual property, and GI recognition that set this agreement apart.

Dr Ajay Sahai, DG & CEO, FIEO, outlined bilateral trade with UK at US$ 56 billion — US$ 23 billion merchandise and US$ 33 billion services. India enjoys a surplus of US$ 3.5 billion in goods and US$ 6.6 billion in services. He emphasised that tariff cuts of 4%–18% across sectors will give Indian exporters a sharper edge, particularly in marine products where India's share is just 2.25% of the UK's US$ 5.4 billion market. He highlighted CETA's flexible rules of origin, allowing exporters to benefit from product-specific rules, simplified documentation, and exemptions for small consignments under £1,000 — a significant gain for MSMEs and e-commerce exporters.

Dr Kishore Jayaraman, OBE, UKIBC Board Member, noted that CETA would act as a growth engine, spurring exports, investments, and people-to-people ties. Mr Vikram Singh, Founder, Strats Value Global Services and former UKDBT official, added that pharmaceuticals, IT services, engineering, and agri-exports stand to benefit, with enhanced mobility and lower social security costs boosting MSMEs and start-ups.

Welcoming participants, Mr Ashish Jain, DDG & Regional Head (NR), FIEO, highlighted the historic depth of India–UK ties and CETA's role in dismantling tariff and non-tariff barriers. He moderated an interactive Q&A, where over 200 exporters discussed documentation, tariff schedules, and sectoral concessions.

The deliberations affirmed that CETA is more than a trade pact — it is a strategic partnership that will generate jobs, spur innovation, and integrate MSMEs, women entrepreneurs, and start-ups into global value chains. Once ratified by both parliaments within 6–9 months, it will take effect, with exporters urged to gear up for the ambitious US$ 120 billion bilateral trade target by 2030. ■

Opportunities Under Free Trade Agreement



Dr E Vishnu Vardhan Reddy, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, GoI addressing the participants. Sitting on dais: Mr B. Ambedkar Raju, Incharge-Parcel Operations, Dept of Posts; Mr Akshay SC, Joint Director of Foreign Trade; Mr R Ravi Kumar, President, FTCCI; H E Mr Gareth Wynn Owen, British Deputy High Commissioner, Hyderabad; Mr K Unnikrishnan, Joint DG, FIEO; Mr Sambhaji Chavan, Joint DGFT and Mr Amlendu Bipul Mishra, AGM & Branch Head, ECGC Ltd

Dr E Vishnu Vardhan Reddy, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, has described the India–UK CETA as a new milestone agreement. He recommended that MSMEs be encouraged to use platforms such as the Trade Connect Portal, embrace paperless business, digital payments, and financial assurance in international trade. The India–UK FTA will become a template to negotiate with all partner countries, he said. He was speaking at a Program on Export Opportunities to the UK and Benefits under India–UK CETA that was organised jointly by FIEO and DGFT in partnership with FTCCI on September 11, 2025 at Hyderabad. Over 100+ exporters, entrepreneurs, and stakeholders attended the programme.

Mr Gareth Wynn Owen, British Deputy High Commissioner, Hyderabad, welcomed the event as timely. He said, "We are all excited about this FTA. It is a very comprehensive agreement and will serve as the blueprint for all future FTAs. What it means to exporters and importers is making trade faster and easier. Duties will come down significantly, many products will become cheaper, and these facilities will attract more investments in each other's countries." He further highlighted that India is already the second-largest investor in the UK and encouraged SMEs to scale up operations.



H E Mr Gareth Wynn Owen, British Deputy High Commissioner, Hyderabad addressing the participants. Others are Mr B Ambedkar Raju, Incharge-Parcel Operations, Dept of Posts; Mr Akshay SC, Joint Director of Foreign Trade; Mr R Ravi Kumar, President, FTCCI; Dr E Vishnu Vardhan Reddy, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, GoI; Mr K Unnikrishnan, Joint DG, FIEO; Mr Sambhaji Chavan, Joint DGFT and Mr Amlendu Bipul Mishra, AGM & Branch Head, ECGC Ltd

Mr Sambhaji Chavan, Joint Director General of Foreign Trade and Mr Akshay SC, Joint Director of Foreign Trade, explained the benefits of duty-free access for 99% of Indian exports, particularly in labour-intensive sectors like textiles and marine products, and services such as IT and Finance. For the UK, tariffs on over 80% of its tariff lines would be reduced. They stressed that the CETA would enhance India's competitiveness against major UK import sources such as China, the US, and Germany. The presentation includes Strategies to Ensure Post CETA Gains, UK's tariffs on products from India, Immediate Duty-Free Goods and Benefits, India's tariffs on products from the UK, Sensitive Sectors, India – UK CETA: Boosting Trade in Services, Government Procurement and sectors with major gains viz. Pharmaceutical, Medical Devices, Leather & Footwear, Textiles, Gems & Jewellery, Engineering, Marine, Women &Youth, SMEs and Businesses, Workers & Professionals. Mr K Unnikrishnan, Jt DG, FIEO (SR), called India – UK CETA a landmark deal ushering in a new era of trade agreements, with Telangana exporters standing to gain significantly. He urged exporters to prepare themselves to create demand in UK markets by scaling up, producing quality products and ensuring goods qualify for reduced duties by following Rules of Origin criteria.



View of the participants

Mr B Ambedkar Raju, Incharge-Parcel Operations, Department of Posts, introduced

Dak Ghar Niryat Kendras (DNKs), an initiative enabling MSMEs and artisans to export through post offices with simplified digital documentation, customs integration, and logistics support. Mr Amlendu Bipul Mishra, AGM & Branch Head, ECGC Ltd, spoke about ECGC's role in providing export credit insurance, mitigating risks like buyer defaults and political instability, and improving access to credit for exporters.

Mr R Ravi Kumar, President, FTCCI, said that the India–UK CETA represents more than just a trade agreement – it is a gateway to enhanced economic cooperation, reduced tariff barriers, and unprecedented market access opportunities.

For our SME entrepreneurs, manufacturers, and exporters, this agreement opens new horizons for growth and expansion into one of the world's most sophisticated markets.

Mr AVPS Chakravarthi, Chair, International Trade& Business Relations Committee, FTCCI, stated that the agreement can create fresh collaboration opportunities in several areas for entrepreneurs and start-ups and help in exploring the markets.

Mr R Kulkarni, Head, FIEO (Telangana Chapter) delivered the vote of thanks. ■

Accessing the EU Market



View of the session

Mr Prashant Seth, Joint Deputy Director General, FIEO, has highlighted the growing importance of the EU in the current geopolitical context. He noted that India faces tariff burdens from the US, making the EU a key export destination where Indian products can achieve better returns. Of India's total $437 billion in exports, about 20% are directed to the EU, with Germany accounting for approximately $10 billion, followed by Italy, Spain, Belgium (around $8 billion), and others. He was speaking at a webinar on "Accessing the EU Market: Latest and Upcoming Rules on Agri-Food Products" that was organised by FIEO in association with the Embassy of India to the EU, Belgium and Luxembourg, and COLEAD Europe, on September 15, 2025. The objective of the webinar was to update Indian exporters on the EU's upcoming regulations, potential challenges, and strategies to ensure compliance with the new rules.

With respect to the food sector, he emphasised India's strong potential, supported by abundant raw material availability and the production of about 300 million tonnes of food grains and horticultural products annually. He underlined the need for deeper market penetration in the EU, which can only be achieved by meeting EU regulations—often complex and requiring clear guidance to interpret and apply. Compliance with certifications and standards, he stressed, is critical for accessing these markets, especially for consumable food products. He further shared that the federation has been proactive in promoting food exports by regularly organising delegations and training programmes.

On his part, Dr Venkatesh Palani Samy, Adviser (Agriculture & Marine Products), Embassy of India to the EU, Belgium, and Luxembourg, highlighted the significance of the EU market for Indian exporters. He noted that the India–EU Free Trade Agreement is nearing conclusion, with the 13th round of negotiations recently held in Delhi demonstrating strong interest from both sides and expected completion by the end of the year. He emphasised that while the EU offers a high-quality and profitable market, success depends on strict adherence to EU regulations. Non-compliance can lead to increased physical inspections, citing recent instances where inspection rates rose from 20% to 50% due to pesticide violations.

He also pointed out that the EU is an agricultural surplus region, exporting over $240 billion and importing around $200 billion, meaning Indian exporters compete with highly efficient producers. He stressed that maintaining high standards and rigorous compliance is essential to avoid financial losses or shipment rejections. He concluded by expressing hope that the session would provide participants with a clearer understanding of EU regulations and compliance requirements.

Mr Chris Downes, Policy and Law Lead Expert, and Ms Axelle Rupert, EU Policy and Regulations Expert from M/s COLEAD, delivered a detailed presentation on EU food safety regulations and sustainability initiatives, covering several important areas, including Pesticide MRLs—current and upcoming challenges; increased EU controls on Indian exports—the what, why, and implications; mineral oil hydrocarbons and the upcoming EU rules; antimicrobials in animal products—the objectives and implications for India; the EU Deforestation Regulation; the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive; the Green Claims Directive; and new packaging rules.

The session witnessed participation of APEDA, Spices Board, DGFT (Bangalore), Export Inspection Council (EIC), along with a large number of exporters on a Pan-India basis. Specific clarifications were sought by the participants, including limits for mineral oils in processed food and primary packaging; documentation requirements such as Declarations of Conformity for recyclable packaging; traceability requirements for multi-ingredient or ready-to-eat products; risk-based approaches for pesticide residues and maximum residue limits (MRLs); and queries on regulations for specific products like guar gum and sweeteners. Participants also sought practical tools for tracking applicable EU regulations by HS code and guidance on implementing blockchain-based traceability solutions. ■

CETA Spurs Growth



R-L: Mr Sanjeev Chawla, Additional Development Commissioner, MSME, DFO-Karnal; Ms Arun Narula, PS & Member, Business Excellence Support Team, RA Panipat; Ms Hemlata Hedau, Assistant DGFT; Mr Ashish Jain, DDG & Regional Head (NR), FIEO; Mr Dhananjay Jha, Branch Manager, ECGC and Ms Manisha Jha, Deputy Director, FIEO (NR)

Mr Sanjeev Chawla, Additional Development Commissioner, MSME, DFO-Karnal, has spotlighted the strength of Haryana's MSME ecosystem, which comprises 15,37,334 enterprises (Micro: 14,99,272; Small: 34,732; Medium: 3,330), including 4,21,843 women-owned and 2,25,945 SC-owned units, generating employment for over 72 lakh people. He has addressed the diverse needs

> "Haryana's MSME ecosystem that comprises 15,37,334 enterprises generates employment for over 72 lakh people."

of MSMEs, covering affordable finance, technology, marketing, branding, working capital, and sustainability.

Mr Chawla also explained the MSME Sustainable (ZED) Certification Scheme, which promotes Zero Defect, Zero Effect manufacturing. The scheme offers Bronze, Silver, and Gold certifications and financial support of up to 80% for micro, 60% for small, and 50% for medium enterprises, enhancing quality, efficiency, and credibility while adhering to environmental standards.

He was speaking at an engaging and insightful interactive session at Karnal on September 19, 2025 that was organised by FIEO in association with DGFT, RA Panipat on September 19, 2025 to help exporters from Haryana understand and leverage the India–UK Comprehensive Economic & Trade Agreement (CETA). The session was graced by also by other distinguished dignitaries, including Ms Hemlata Hedau, ITS, Assistant Director General of Foreign Trade; Mr Dhananjay Jha, Branch Manager, ECGC; Mr R L Sharma, State President, Haryana Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association and Mr Ashish Jain, DDG & RH (NR), FIEO.

The programme focused on Karnal's strengths in agriculture, food processing, pharmaceuticals, textiles, and engineering, and brought together over 50 enthusiastic participants from across Haryana. It provided a platform for detailed discussions on tariff benefits, regulatory cooperation, and new market opportunities in the United Kingdom.

Ms Arun Narula, PS and Member, Business Excellence Support Team RA-Panipat, elaborated on sector-specific benefits under CETA, highlighting prospects for goods including textiles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, engineering and electrical products, dairy, fresh/chilled meat, and live animals. She also shared insights on services, noting that under the Market Access offer, the UK has opened 137 sub-sectors to India, while India has reciprocated with 108 sub-sectors.

Key areas of interest include IT/ITeS, financial services, professional and business services, and education services, with projected growth of 15–20% annually for Indian software and IT firms.

Mr Jha stressed ECGC's pivotal role in backing exporters through credit risk insurance, export finance facilitation, and advisory services. With CETA offering preferential market access, reduced tariffs, and simplified trade procedures, ECGC enables exporters—particularly SMEs from Haryana and Karnal—to confidently enter the UK market, mitigate risks, and make informed strategic decisions for sustained growth.Mr Sharma expressed optimism about the boost the Indian pharmaceutical sector stands to gain under this agreement.

Mr Jain had earlier in his welcome remarks underlined the historic trade and cultural ties

> "Under the Market Access offer, the UK has opened 137 sub-sectors to India, while India has reciprocated with 108 sub-sectors."

between India and the United Kingdom, and highlighted CETA's role in reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers, enhancing market access, and creating new avenues across sectors. He noted that Haryana contributes nearly USD 19 billion annually to India's exports, with a 4.36% share, ranking 8th among Indian states. Karnal, known as the "Rice Bowl of India" and an emerging hub for pharmaceuticals and MSMEs, can diversify exports and strengthen global value chain linkages under more favourable conditions.

Additionally, from FIEO, Ms Manisha Jha, Deputy Director, FIEO (NR) presented an analysis of Haryana's export potential,



A view of the participants

pointing out that the UK ranked as the 3rd largest destination for Haryana's exports with a 5.61% share in FY 2024–25. Participants were apprised of top items exported at the 8-digit level and products covered under India–UK CETA.

The session concluded with a vibrant open house where participants raised queries addressed by DGFT, ECGC, MSME, and FIEO officials. Exporters from Karnal—including basmati rice, dairy and agro-processing, pharmaceuticals, engineering, and handloom sectors—gained practical insights into harnessing CETA-driven growth in the UK market. Through such initiatives, FIEO continues to empower exporters with knowledge, guidance, and support to unlock trade agreements, contributing to India's vision of USD 2 trillion in exports by 2030. ■

International Sustainability Requirements



Mr Unnikrishnan K, Jt DG, FIEO (SR) addressing the participants. Also seen are Ms Sivaranjini from Environmental Management Center Pvt Ltd, Mumbai; Ms Selvanayagi, Jt Director, FIEO (SR) and Dr Subrahamanya Sivam, Subject Matter Expert

Mr Unnikrishnan K, Joint Director General, FIEO (SR), has spotlighted major international frameworks and buyer requirements affecting exports—EU Green Deal, CBAM, EPR, corporate reporting standards, and buyer-specific codes. He stressed that sustainability compliance is now strategic for both market access and long-term competitiveness.

His observations came during an Outreach Programme on Assessing Business Preparedness for Meeting International Sustainability Requirements organised by FIEO at Chennai on September 12, 2025.

The event was designed to guide members—particularly MSMEs—in understanding and adapting to evolving sustainability standards demanded by global buyers, regulators, and trade partners.

Through case studies, presentations, and interactive sessions, participants explored ESG (environmental, social, governance) requirements, traceability, sustainable packaging, labour compliances, and ways to convert sustainability into competitive advantage. Over 40 participants attended, including exporters of textiles, leather goods, agro products, packaging suppliers, and logistics providers. On his part, Dr Subrahamanya Sivam, subject matter expert, analysed the EU Green Deal, Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), and evolving buyer reporting norms.

He also highlighted compliance timelines and projected enforcement scenarios that exporters must prepare for.

Ms Sivaranjini from Environmental Management Centre Pvt Ltd, Mumbai, presented a practical roadmap: baseline assessment, prioritised action plans, policy documentation, supplier audits, and monitoring. She underlined cost-effective, high-impact measures especially suited to MSMEs.

Ms Selvanayagi, Joint Director, FIEO (SR), highlighted various FIEO initiatives to spread ESG awareness among members.

The Q&A session revealed that while exporters broadly understand sustainability requirements, many lack clarity on technical compliance and documentation. The programme addressed these gaps through detailed discussions. Feedback indicated that the programme enhanced awareness and offered actionable guidance, enabling participants to begin and accelerate their sustainability journeys. ■

India-UK CETA



Mr Unnikrishnan, Joint Director General, FIEO giving presentation

Mr Mahesh Kumar, Manager (Exports & Marketing), Tobacco Board (HO), has pointed out that the India-UK Free Trade Agreement known as CETA has the potential to create fresh opportunities for exporters, noting that the UK has extended free market access to Indian tobacco and tobacco products. India, however, continues to maintain an import tariff of 33% (30% BCD + 3% SWS) to protect its domestic farmers. He was speaking at a Hybrid Outreach Programme on the India–UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) that was organised by FIEO in collaboration with the Tobacco Board at Ongole on September 18, 2025.

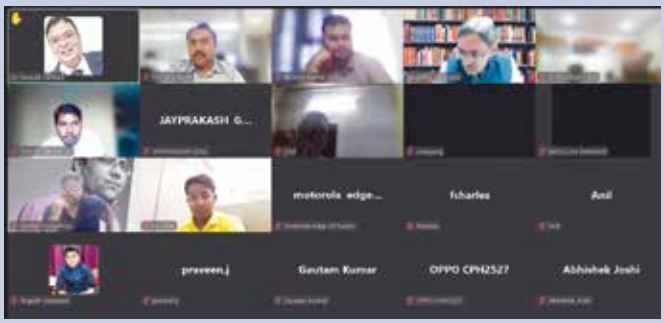
Chief Guest Mr Unnikrishnan K, Joint Director General, FIEO, addressed participants, stressing the Government of India's goal of doubling trade with the UK by 2030. He termed the India–UK CETA, signed in July 2025 in the presence of the two Prime Ministers, a landmark pact that strengthens engagement with developed economies while enabling deeper integration. He explained how the agreement ensures preferential access, tariff reductions, and streamlined procedures, expected to raise exports, attract investment, and build stronger industrial linkages. He stressed that exporters, traders, and industry stakeholders must remain well-informed to capitalise on these opportunities and help achieve the 2030 trade vision.

Mr Unnikrishnan also shared a comprehensive overview of the agreement, covering:

- India–UK trade relations and benefits to goods and services sectors
- Gains and opportunities for both economies
- Key chapters and provisions of CETA
- Anticipated economic impact of the agreement

The hybrid programme closed with an interactive Q&A, where participants engaged directly with dignitaries. Mr Rama Rao, Regional Manager, Tobacco Board RM Office, Ongole, delivered the vote of thanks, commending the speakers and participants for their valuable inputs and active involvement. ■

LC-A Financial Tool



View of the participants

Mr Gaurang Vasavada, Expert Faculty, has said that the Letter of Credit (LC) has its worth only when all its terms and conditions, including submission of documents called for under an LC are fully complied with by the beneficiary. He was speaking at Webinar on Letter of Credit – as a Financing Tool – Benefits and Precautions organised by FIEO jointly with the ICICI Bank on September 4, 2025, in Gujarat that was attended by around 136 participants.

Earlier, Mr Jayprakash Goel, Head, FIEO (Gujarat Chapter), Mr Vasavada along with Mr Bhavin Joshi, Subject Matter Expert (SME–ETRG Product), ICICI Bank Ltd, Mumbai, and all the participants. He spoke on the important aspects relating to LC, the flow of transaction, and the importance of conditions in an LC to ensure timely payment. He also highlighted the complications in compliance with various trade requirements as required by the buyer and also emphasised the need to safeguard the interests of the exporter.

On his part, Mr Vasavada, informed about the methods of payment in international trade and then moved on to the details of understanding the LC, its worth, the various types and the different parties in an LC, and the flow chart of an LC transaction. He explained in detail the role of each party to the LC as well as how it serves as a financing tool for both the exporter and the importer. If there are any discrepancies, the LC remains only a piece of paper, as the LC issuing bank is then required to go back to the applicant/ importer to seek approval. As such, while explaining the important articles of rules governing LC, namely UCPDC 600 of the International Chamber of Commerce, he explained the preparation of each document very meticulously. He also covered certain Dos and Don'ts while handling LCs and documents related thereto. Mr Joshi spoke about the various products of ICICI Bank which ease the handling of bills and payments by exporters. He also informed the audience about their product Trade Online, which is helpful in daily monitoring of the transactions and the pendency relating to EDPMS. Mr Goel delivered the vote of thanks. ■

India-UK Free Trade Agreement



L-R: Mr Vinay Sharma, Head, FIEO (Punjab Chapter); Dr Ati Priye, CEO, CGC University, Mohali; Mr Utpal Kumar Acharya, Joint DGFT (RA) Ludhiana; Mr Santosh Kumar, Branch Manager, ECGC Limited; Ms Monika Khullar, Chief Manager, EXIM Bank of India and CA Ravi Chopra, Partner, Parshottam & Associates

Mr Utpal Kumar Acharya, Joint DGFT (RA) Ludhiana, has said that, "India, which became the 4th largest economy during the year 2025 and is projected to be the 3rd largest by the year 2027. The UK remains the 6th largest in global economic order. The India–UK Trade Agreement is the one of its kind of agreement to grant '0%' duty access to Indian exporters on around 995 product lines exported to the UK."

He added that sectors like textiles, apparel, gems and jewellery, agriculture, marine products and pharmaceuticals will be benefitted, along with enhanced market access for IT and service professionals in the UK. In return, UK exporters will also gain from reduced Indian tariffs on goods such as whisky, automobiles, machinery, and consumer products. This agreement expected to come into force may be in the next 9 to 12 months period after getting the nod from Parliamentary set ups on both sides.

He was speaking at an Interactive session on "Export Promotion & India-UK Free Trade Agreement" that was organised by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) in association with FIEO at Ludhiana on August 25, 2025. The session was conducted by experts from DGFT, India EXIM Bank, FIEO, ECGC Ltd, along with prominent consultants and academicians from the region. Overall, close to 90 prominent exporters from Ludhiana and surrounding regions were in attendance.

On his part, Mr Vinay Sharma, Head, FIEO (Punjab Chapter), said that, "The exports play a critical role in the economic growth of any country. India's exports are doing well and the future looks promising. The GoI is also actively undertaking policy reforms and as a part of it, India and the UK recently signed a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), that too after three to five years of negotiations. This marks a major achievement in strengthening economic ties between the two nations.

> "The India–UK Trade Agreement is the one of its kind of agreement to grant '0%' duty access to Indian exporters on around 995 products lines exported to UK.

The India–UK FTA opens unprecedented opportunities across key sectors, especially for MSMEs and labour-intensive industries. It does not only reduce tariffs but also eases regulatory barriers for services and investments. The agreement will also make a way for cooperation in sectors like defence, security, critical technologies, education, tourism benefiting both the parties.

Mr Santosh Kumar, Branch Manager, ECGC Ltd, during his address said that, "The India–UK FTA is expected to boost Indian exports, particularly in labour-intensive sectors like textiles and leather is good news looking and this will further promote economic stability and growth. Under this agreement there will also be an increased quota for Indian workers in a few sectors in the UK and a three-year exemption from social security payments, enhancing labour mobility and service trade cooperation".

He further highlighted the ECGC's role in promoting exports by providing credit risk insurance and protecting exporters and banks against commercial and political risks.

Mr Monika Khullar, Chief Manager, EXIM Bank of India during her interaction said that "By the year 2030, India is projected to become the 3rd largest economy, creating immense opportunities for exporters and such key trade agreements hold the future key to be a developed nation in coming years".

She also emphasised the need for Indian exporters to focus on Branding, Sustainability, Compliance and Value-Added Production for which India Exim Bank's financial and advisory support may help companies in maximising the opportunities arising from this landmark Trade Deal. She also shared the role of Exim Bank in supporting exporters through Lines of Credit, Buyer's Credit, Trade Assistance Programme (TAP), Export Factoring and MSME-focused initiatives like UBHARTE SITAARE.

CA (Mr) Ravi Chopra, Partner, Parshottam & Associates said that, "The immense opportunity will open for Indian exporters once this FTA gets implemented. Sectors such as Textiles, Leather, Footwear, Gems & Jewellery, Marine Products, Auto Components, Engineering Goods, will enjoy duty-free access from earlier imposed average tariffs of 8–16%.

He further said that the projected trade growth is expected to double by 2030 between both partner countries, providing India a competitive edge over countries like Bangladesh, Vietnam and other competitors in UK market".

He also urged the participants to plan in advance and be ready to encash when opportunity arrives, the use of digital trade platforms, alternate sales channels and government support schemes will play a key role making the FTA a strong enabler of India's journey towards becoming a developed nation in future.

Dr Ati Priye, Chief Executive Officer, CGC University shared that, "The trade agreement marks a historic shift from colonial-era trade imbalances to a modern partnership of equals.

The agreement is projecting a target of $100 billion trade by 2030. Through this agreement, Investment flows are expected to become more balanced. Key areas for UK firms for investment include. Manufacturing, Infrastructure, Financial Services, Innovation, IT are the sectors where the UK will look forward to investing in India. UK exporters will gain access to India's 1.4 billion-consumer market, particularly in segments like automobiles, whiskies, agriculture and few more.

The Indian manufacturers from textiles, footwear, seafood sectors will benefit from the proposed "Nil Tariffs Percentage" in the UK, giving an easy pass and competitive advantage among its other competitors. ■

International Trade for New Entrepreneurs



Group Photo of the participants

Mr Swaminathan, Head, FIEO (Coimbatore Chapter), delivering the opening remarks of a a three-day Certificate Course on International Trade for New Entrepreneurs and Working Executives held from September 16–18, in Coimbatore, has said that India is targeting US$ 2 trillion in exports by 2030, equally divided between merchandise and services. He underlined that the course, organised by FIEO, would instil confidence in new exporters, equipping them to succeed in international markets. He also reiterated FIEO's services as a vital bridge between exporters and government, providing training, workshops, and seminars to keep members abreast of policy and market shifts.

The course adopted a practical approach to familiarise budding entrepreneurs with all major aspects of exports and imports. Core sessions included How to Start and Manage Export Business and Step-by-Step Process to Identify Products, Markets and Buyers. Overall, 31 participants benefitted from this intensive programme.

On day 1, Mr Shivaraman, Export-Import Consultant, explained how to research markets, prepare business plans, source products, fix pricing, secure financing, and establish buyer networks. He highlighted logistics, payment systems, and compliance as pillars of sustainable trade practice.

Mr Jatin Sanghvi, Chartered Accountant and GST Consultant, presented GST essentials including types of supply, invoicing, ITC conditions, and refund mechanisms, backed with case studies. He observed that recent policy reforms have direct implications for exporters. Customs expert Mr Vijayan Gokul, Retd. Superintendent, spoke on documentation, pre- and post-shipment processes, AD Code registration, duty drawback, incentives, and warehousing. He stressed accuracy in paperwork for seamless clearance.

Ms Hari Priya, YP, JDGFT Coimbatore, outlined DGFT's role and Free Trade Agreement benefits. She explained IE Code registration and detailed support measures like EPCG and Advance Authorisation schemes, enabling duty-free import of machinery and raw materials.

Mr Venkatesh, Chief Manager, SBI Coimbatore, covered Incoterms, EDPMS, payment modes, Letters of Credit, and FEMA regulations. He discussed foreign currency loans for working capital and project finance, underscoring compliance and security measures.

Mr Ritesh Chandra, Executive Officer, ECGC Ltd, showcased export credit insurance products. By mitigating payment risks from political or commercial defaults, ECGC enhances trade confidence and broadens access to institutional credit.

Mr Selvam, Marketing Executive, India Post Coimbatore, detailed services under Dak Ghar Niryat Kendra (DNK). The scheme supports MSMEs and artisans with documentation, logistics, and customs clearance via postal networks, aiding rural and district exports.

Mr Rajendran, Assistant Director & DDO, MSME DFO Coimbatore, outlined MSME loan eligibility and procedures. He explained the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust (CGTMSE), a joint initiative of the Ministry of MSME and SIDBI to boost institutional credit for small enterprises.

Finally, certificates of completion were jointly presented by Mr Swaminathan and Mr Rajendran to the participants. ■

Certificate Programme by FIEO



Group photo of participants felicitated on the concluding day by senior officials from FIEO and FICSI

Given the significant contribution of the food and agri sector—accounting for nearly 12% of India's total exports—FIEO, in collaboration with the Food Industry Capacity and Skill Initiative (FICSI), organised a first-of-its-kind five-day Certificate Programme on Food & Agri Exports from August 25-29, 2025 at Niryat Bhawan, New Delhi, which witnessed active participation of 20 delegates from across India. The comprehensive programme was structured across five themes to provide in-depth exposure to various aspects of the food and agri exports ecosystem.

The inaugural day on August 25, themed "Understanding Export Fundamentals and Market Opportunities," featured sessions by Dr Ajay Sahai, DG & CEO, FIEO, on Introduction to Exporting and Building an Export Mindset; Mr Manish Tanwar, AGM & Head, RTMU, State Bank of India – Global Markets, on Export Financing and Payment Terms; Mr Prashant Seth, Joint DDG, FIEO, on Overview of Export Logistics; and Mr Pratik Navale, Assistant Director, FIEO, on Overview of FTAs and their practical utilisation, and Ms Reeba Abraham, Deputy General Manager, APEDA, on Overview of Global Agri Trade and Market Trends.

On August 26, under the theme "Product Selection and Quality Assurance," Dr Sujata Pandit Sharma and Dr Alok Dhar Dubey from FICSI covered topics including Criteria for Selecting Exportable Agri-Products, Value Addition: Processing, Packaging, and Branding, Market Research Tools, and Managing Post-Harvest Losses and Supply Chain Integrity. This was followed by Mr C S Ranawat, Assistant Director, PQ Cochin, who delivered a detailed presentation on the Role and Importance of Plant Quarantine in Agri Exports, and Mr Nilesh Trivedi, Assistant Director, MSME-DFO, Indore, who discussed MSME Schemes.

> "The comprehensive programme was structured across five themes to provide in-depth exposure to various aspects of the food and agri exports ecosystem."

The third day, August 27, was focused on "Regulatory Compliance, Packaging and Labelling for Exports," with Mr N Palanikumar, Assistant Director (Tech.), EIC, presenting on Regulatory Approvals and International Standards, and Mr Shantanu Gupta, Consultant, Green Food Consultancy, leading sessions on Packaging Compliance and Eco-Friendly Options and Market-Specific Labelling Requirements.

The fourth day, August 28, was dedicated to "Export Documentation and Logistics," was held at the GAL Cargo Terminal Building (Export), IGI Airport, in association with Air Cargo Forum India (ACFI). It featured technical sessions on Export Documentation, Procedures and Customs Clearance by Mr Raj Sharma, and Freight Forwarding and Cold Chain Logistics by Mr Anupam Mishra.

The sessions, supervised by Mr Seth and Ms Alpana Chaturvedi, Chairperson, ACFI Skill Development Task Pillar, concluded with a guided visit to the IGI cargo terminal, providing participants with practical exposure to cargo operations.

The final day on August 29, themed "Understanding Codex Standards," was led by Dr Sanjay Dave, Ex-Chairman, CODEX, who covered Codex Alimentarius: History, Significance and Export Compliance, Introduction to Food Testing and Navigating International Markets, and The Role of FSMS in Export Compliance.

The programme culminated with a certification distribution ceremony graced by distinguished dignitaries including Dr Sahai; Mr Sunil Marwah, CEO, FICSI; Dr Sanjay Dave, Ex-Chairman, CODEX; Mr Seth; and Dr Alok Dhar Dubey, Programme Manager, FICSI. All the sessions across the five days were coordinated by Ms Sunena Sharma, Assistant Director, FIEO.

The participants shared enthusiastic feedback, appreciating the practical insights, expert-led sessions, and hands-on exposure provided throughout the programme.

The initiative not only strengthened their understanding of global food and agri export requirements but also enhanced their readiness to explore new international markets. ■

WEEKLY INTERACTION

#TRADE QUERIES

FIEO offers you opportunity to seek clarification on key issues related to Foreign Trade with Dr Ajay Sahai, Director General & CEO, FIEO on Zoom every Wednesday from 3 pm to 5 pm (IST). Dr Sahai has served many important offices in the Government of India in various capacities. As Jt. DGFT (Policy) from 1996 to 2003, he played an important role in formulating the Exim Policy. All you need to do is to pre-register on www.fieo.org. Excerpts from the previous Weekly Interactions on Trade Queries are reproduced here.



DR AJAY SAHAI, DG & CEO, FIEO

What are the key proposals in the Draft FEMA Regulations 2025 relating to export defaults and unrealised export proceeds?

Under the proposed Foreign Exchange Management (Export & Import of Goods & Services) Regulations, 2025, RBI is rationalising many export rules. One key proposal is that if an exporter fails to realise full export proceeds within two years from due date, and the cumulative unrealised amount exceeds INR 25 crore, further exports by that exporter would only be permitted against full advance payment or via irrevocable Letter of Credit (LC). Another proposal is consolidation of existing scattered directives into one regulation, stricter norms for advance payments, and tighter monitoring of realisation pathways. This change is intended to deter chronic non repatriation of foreign exchange while giving structure and clarity to export compliance norms.

What are the two options available for exporting under GST and how do they differ?

Exports under GST are zero-rated and can be done via LUT/Bond (without IGST) or with IGST payment followed by refund. The LUT route avoids upfront tax but requires refund of unutilised ITC. The IGST route allows claiming a refund of tax paid on export. The choice depends on cash flow and procedural preference. In the first case, no application is to be filed and Customs allows IGST refund while in the latter, application is to be filed which is refunded by GST authorities.

Under GST/export policy, what is the 1% GST benefit for merchant exporters (concessional rate 0.1%) — what is its rationale, eligibility, and how does it interact with the zero rating regime?

The 1% GST benefit (i.e. concessional rate of 0.1%) for merchant exporters is a special provision allowing domestic suppliers to charge export-bound merchant exporters goods at a very low IGST rate (0.1%), instead of the standard domestic GST rates, to ease working capital constraints for merchant exporters.

What are Merchanting Trade Transactions (MTTs) and what rules apply?

MTTs involve buying goods from one foreign country and selling them to another without the goods entering India. RBI allows them if transactions are routed through the same AD bank, completed within 9 months, and properly documented. RBI has now allowed a six months gap between exports/ imports legs as against 4 months earlier. No remittance delays or mismatches should occur to avoid compliance issues.

What changes does the Draft FEMA 2025 propose for export advance payments?

The draft proposes allowing long-term advances (up to 10 years) for exporters with a 3-year good track record, especially for long-term contracts. It also relaxes the refund process for unutilised advances, allowing banks to handle such cases without prior RBI approval, improving exporter flexibility.

How is the refund of unutilised ITC calculated under GST for exports without IGST?

Exporters using the LUT route can claim a refund of unutilised Input Tax Credit. The refund is calculated based on turnover ratio and ITC in the ledger using a formula under Rule 89(4). Capital goods are excluded, and accurate filings (GSTR-1, GSTR-3B) are mandatory.

Are there exemptions from export reporting under FEMA for low-value exports?

Under the existing foreign exchange/RBI norms, exporters were required to report all export transactions through Export Declaration Form (EDF) systems or equivalent systems, with due tracking of remittances and reconciliation via shipping bills. However, recent changes have introduced exemptions/ simplified reporting for low-value export transactions via online payment gateways:

(i) The RBI recently raised a threshold so that export payments up to ₹10 lakh per shipment received via Online Payment Gateway Service Providers (OPGSP) (e.g. PayPal, Stripe, etc.) may be exempt from the detailed EDF reporting compliance, provided the remittance conforms to norms.

(ii) Before this change, the threshold was lower (e.g. ₹1,000 or some minimal value). The new higher threshold is intended to ease compliance burden for small/micro exporters. RBI still requires exporters to ensure that the export proceeds are repatriated/realised within permitted time,

and aggregated and matched with shipping bills. The exemption is procedural (reporting relief) and does not absolve obligation of realisation or compliance with FEMA/ exchange control rules.

What recourse does an exporter have if the foreign buyer is doubtful to pay?

Exporters can rely on ECGC insurance to cover commercial and political risks. Using LCs, advance payments, escrow arrangements, or legal action are other remedies. Proper due diligence and credit checks help minimise such risks, and ECGC coverage is widely recommended.

What is the 0.1% GST benefit for merchant exporters?

Merchant exporters can procure goods at a concessional 0.1% GST rate from domestic suppliers, easing working capital pressure. The final export remains zero-rated. This benefit is conditional on documentation and applies only when goods are clearly intended for export.

When can exports be invoiced and settled in Indian Rupees (INR)?

Under Indian foreign exchange and EXIM policy, the standard expectation is that exports be invoiced and paid in freely convertible foreign currency, and the proceeds repatriated accordingly. However, there are certain conditions under which INR invoicing/settlement is permitted, though tightly regulated:

Permitted conditions/routes:

Vostro account route:
Exports to certain countries may allow settlement in INR through a freely convertible Vostro account of a non-resident bank (outside India), subject to RBI approval and prescribed conditions. This is permitted in certain cases (subject to rules) under the Master Direction/ FEMA regime.

Bilateral or trade settlement arrangements:
In certain bilateral or multilateral trade settlement agreements between India and partner countries, imports/exports may be settled in INR (or local currency) under mutual agreement, subject to RBI approval.

However, strict guardrails apply to prevent violation of exchange regulation norms.

What is the recent RBI relaxation relating to exports through "Bharat Mart" in UAE, and why is it significant?

In April 2025, the RBI issued Circular 03/2025 26 allowing Indian exporters to route goods via warehouses in "Bharat Mart" in UAE under more liberal norms. Under this circular, AD banks may permit exporters to realise and repatriate the full export value within nine months from the date of sale from the warehouse. In addition, exporters (with valid IEC) can now open or hire such warehouses in Bharat Mart without onerous preconditions (subject to "reasonableness" checks), and may remit initial and recurring expenses for setup/operations.

What relaxation has RBI made for exporters using IFSC banking units with respect to repatriation of export proceeds?

RBI has extended the repatriation period for export proceeds held in foreign currency accounts in IFSC banking units from 1 month to 3 months. This gives exporters more flexibility in managing forex funds in IFSC accounts, which can be beneficial for liquidity management and smoother working capital flow. By encouraging usage of IFSC banking, it may also help channel forex flows more efficiently. ■

ATTENTION MEMBERS! HELP US TO SERVE YOU BETTER

Please let us know the changes in your contact information immediately, to help us remain in touch with you. In case of any changes, fill in the following and send it to FIEO:

1. Name of the Company: .....
2. Address: .....
3. City: .....
4. Telephone: .....
5. Fax: .....
6. E-mail: .....
7. Name of the Chief Executive: .....
8. Designation: .....
9. Name of Contact Person: .....
10. Designation: .....

AI Transforms Exporting



Mr Yogesh Gupta, Regional Chairman (ER), FIEO delivering the welcome address



Mr Anil Kariwala, Founder, Kariwala Group of Businesses addressing the participants

FIEO organised an Online Session on "Artificial Intelligence (AI) Roundtable for Decision Makers" on 16 September 2025. The session was anchored and moderated by Mr Anil Kariwala, Founder, Kariwala Group of Businesses, which also operates in Information Technology. Mr Kariwala is equally an active user of AI within his businesses. Ms Debdatta Nandwani, Regional Head, FIEO (ER), in her opening remarks, spotlighted the rapid rise of AI and its wide applications across multiple sectors.

She encouraged participants to benefit from the peer-driven exchange, and to learn about tools already deployed by EXIM enterprises for different business operations.

Highlighting the untapped potential of AI, Mr Yogesh Gupta, Regional Chairman (ER), FIEO, opined that industry still needs to grasp the real magnitude of its role in daily operations. Exporters, however, are already applying AI in essential processes such as export pricing, product costing, and production optimisation, to remain competitive.

Mr Kariwala gave a practical demonstration of varied AI tools and online platforms which businesses may adopt for content creation,

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ECGC Smile Online Customer Portal

At a webinar on ECGC SMILE Online Customer Portal – a digital platform offering online services for exporters on September 15, 2025, Mr Yogesh Gupta, Regional Chairman (ER), FIEO, has highlighted the importance of Credit Insurance in EXIM trade, requested all participants to insure against non-payment by overseas buyers due to political or commercial risks, by taking policy coverage from ECGC, to ensure the financial stability and business continuity of their enterprises. The webinar was organised by FIEO.

On his part, Mr Nitesh Mishra, Executive Officer, ECGC, Kolkata Branch, delivered a presentation on the portal. It's an online platform for Indian exporters and bankers to access ECGC's services digitally. SMILE stands for Simplified Method of Insurance, Lending & Export. The portal has been launched with the purpose of accessing all functions related to ECGC, like accessing BSAL, applying for Credit Limit, filing RoD, filing Claims, seeking extension in due-date/conversion of payment terms, etc, making payment of monthly/quarterly/advance premium, credit limit application fees, etc. The link for the portal is: https://www.ecgcltd.in/registration/step-one?csrt=15604686483124659764

The following steps are to be followed for signing up in the portal:

- Go to the ECGC SMILE sign-up page.



Mr Yogesh Gupta, Regional Chairman (ER), FIEO delivering the welcome address

- Select your user type (exporter or banker).
- Enter your email ID.
- Provide your mobile number.
- Enter a username and a captcha code.
- Submit the form.
- You will receive a verification token at your email ID.
- Confirm the token and your credentials to complete registration.

Excerpts from the interactive session: ••

Q. How do I submit an overdue statement?

A. If a payment for a shipment is overdue by 30 days or more, you must submit an overdue statement through the portal by the 15th of the following month.

Q. How and when do I file a claim?

A. A claim should be lodged separately for each buyer using the prescribed form on the portal. The claim must be filed within 360 days of the invoice's due date or 540 days from the policy expiry date, whichever is earlier.

Q. How can I check the buyer's creditworthiness?

A. You can use the portal to verify the "Specific Approval List (SAL)" and "Buyer Specific Approval List (BSAL)" data before supplying goods. A claim is not available for buyers who appear on these lists.

Q. How do I know what my policy covers?

A. Information about your policy's terms and conditions can be accessed through the portal. For specific coverage questions, you may also need to refer to your policy documents.

Q. What browsers are recommended for the portal?

A. The portal is best viewed on the latest versions of modern web browsers, such as Chrome (version 125+), Mozilla Firefox (version 126+), and Microsoft Edge (version 125+).

Q. Who can I contact for technical help?

A. For assistance with the SMILE portal, you can contact ECGC customer care at their toll-free number 1800 22 4500 or send an email to cs@ecgc.in

The ECGC website also provides a branch locator to find the nearest servicing branch. ■

Delegation to Jordan and Bahrain



Group Photograph with H E Mr Abdullah bin Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industry & Commerce, Kingdom of Bahrain; Mr Vinod K Jacob, Ambassador of India to Bahrain; H E Mr Mohamed Al Kooheji, Second Vice Chairman of BCCI; Mr Abdul Rahman Juma, Chairman, Bahrain India Society (BIS); Ms Nivetha S, Second Secretary, Embassy of India, Bahrain; Mr Prashant Seth, Jt DDG, FIEO and Mr Mohit Hans, Deputy Director, FIEO

With a key objective to enhance India's trade and economic cooperation with Jordan and Bahrain, and in line with the Government's vision to double India's agri exports, FIEO, with the support of the Embassy of India in Jordan and the Embassy of India in Bahrain, mounted a business delegation of food and agri products to the two nations from September 21–24, 2025. This pan-India delegation comprised 32 delegates from 25 Indian companies dealing in a wide range of items such as rice, spices, tea, pulses, seeds, oils, dry fruits, ghee, eggs, ready-to-eat products, soya, mango pulp, beverages, and bakery products.

The Indian trade delegation undertook a two-day visit to Jordan to explore opportunities to boost Indian farm and processed food exports. The objective was to showcase India's capabilities in the sector and enable Indian exporters to establish meaningful business contacts. During this visit, B2B meetings, field and industrial visits, and visits to hypermarkets were organised in Amman, with the active efforts of the Indian Mission.

On Day 1 of the visit, a Buyer-Seller Meet was organised in association with the Embassy of India in Jordan, the Amman Chamber of Commerce, and the Jordanian Businessmen Association.



Mr Vinod K Jacob, Ambassador of India to Bahrain addressing the delegates from India and Bahrain during Inaugural Session

The inaugural session was addressed by Mr V Sivaraman, Head of Chancery & Second Secretary (Commerce); Mr Tariq Hijazi, Director General, Jordanian Businessmen Association; and Mr Prashant Seth, Joint Deputy Director General, FIEO, followed by one-to-one B2B meetings. More than 100 Jordanian companies participated in the event. Later that day, FIEO representatives called upon Indian Ambassador to Jordan, Mr Manish Chauhan, at the Embassy to brief him about the visit. A networking meet in the evening, graced by the Ambassador, saw large participation from prominent Jordanian buyers who explored business opportunities with their Indian counterparts. The Embassy extended appreciation to FIEO, the Indian business delegation, and the local chambers for strengthening India–Jordan trade ties in this vital sector.



Mr Manish Chauhan, Ambassador of India to Jordan interacting with the delegates during Networking Meet

On the second day, delegates visited Safeway Supermarket, interacting with its procurement team to understand sourcing regimes and assess products on display, helping them adapt packaging and offerings for the Jordanian market. Jordan, a net food-importing country with a population of 11 million, imports nearly 98% of consumables due to its water scarcity and declining agricultural output. Following the successful visit to Jordan, the 32-member Indian food and agri delegation travelled to Bahrain, where FIEO, in collaboration with the Embassy of India in Bahrain and with support from the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) and the Bahrain India Society (BIS), organised a Buyer-Seller Meet.

The opening ceremony was attended by H E Mr Abdullah bin Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Kingdom of Bahrain, and H E Mr Vinod K. Jacob, Ambassador of India to Bahrain. Also present were H E Mr Mohamed Al Kooheji, Second Vice Chairman, BCCI, and Mr Abdul Rahman Juma, Chairman, BIS. Mr Seth also addressed the plenary session.Ambassador Jacob emphasised the crucial role of the food and agriculture sectors in strengthening India–Bahrain economic ties. He highlighted that both nations share long-standing trade and people-to-people links and that deepening collaboration in these sectors would enhance trade volumes and mutual prosperity. He also underlined India's newly introduced GST 2.0 reforms, effective from 22 September 2025, simplifying the tax regime to

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FIEO Mounts Business Delegations



Group photo at the Business Forum. Ms Smita Pant, Ambassador of India to Uzbekistan (Tashkent) with Ms Sunita Tatwal, Dy Director, FIEO; Indian delegates; Tashkent delegates and Embassy officials

FIEO organised a business delegation comprising Indian companies that visited Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) and Tashkent (Uzbekistan) from July 21–25, 2025 with the objective of promoting exports from India and strengthening trade ties with Central Asian markets. This visit was coordinated with the Embassies of India in Bishkek and Tashkent, along with the Chambers of Commerce and Industry in both cities. Ms Sunita Tatwal, Deputy Director, FIEO, coordinated the visit of the Indian delegation. The objective of the visit was to explore export opportunities for Indian products in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, and to strengthen trade and economic ties with Central Asian markets.

The aim was to facilitate B2B interactions between Indian exporters and local importers/distributors, to understand market demand, import regulations, and competition in key sectors, and to promote "Made in India" goods in pharmaceuticals, textiles, engineering goods, agriculture, and IT services. India and Central Asia share deep-rooted cultural and historical ties dating back to the Silk Road. The visit sought to revive this spirit through modern trade and cooperation. Bilateral trade between India and Kyrgyzstan has seen steady growth, with India emerging as a reliable supplier of pharmaceuticals, apparel, and chemicals. Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, in turn, offer potential in minerals, agriculture, organic produce, and industrial parts.

Key Activities and Meetings

A. Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

- Business Forum: Organised in collaboration with the Embassy of India, Chamber of Commerce, and JIA Business Association, Bishkek.

Key attendees included:

- Mr Birender Kumar Yadav, Ambassador of India to Kyrgyzstan
- Ms Asel Ibraimova, Head of Trade Intelligence Department, Ministry of Economy and Commerce
- Representatives from the Chamber of Commerce and Mr Azzamek Jeenbaiuulu, Executive Director of JIA Business Association
- Kyrgyz businesses from priority sectors
- B2B Meetings: Direct engagements were arranged between Indian companies and Kyrgyz businesses.
- Market Visits: Delegates visited local markets and industrial zones.
- Policy Discussions: Meetings focused on trade facilitation, logistics, and customs.

B. Tashkent, Uzbekistan

- Business Forum: Held in association with the Embassy of India and Chamber of Commerce, Tashkent.

Key attendees included:

- Ms Smita Pant, Ambassador of India to Uzbekistan; Mr S N Malli, Second Secretary (Pol); Mr Binod Kumar, Attache (Comm), Embassy of India, Tashkent
- Mr Gaparov Isfandiyorbek, Head of Protocol, Chamber of Commerce
- Prominent business leaders from Tashkent

- B2B Networking Event: Organised with local partners to facilitate business connections.
- Roundtable Discussion: On expanding bilateral trade and identifying export growth sectors.
- Site Visits: Delegates toured distribution hubs and major retail chains.

Recommendations

- Organise follow-up virtual B2B meetings with interested counterparts
- Consider setting up an India Trade Facilitation Centre in Central Asia
- Support exporters with regulatory guidance and translation/localisation tools
- Engage with local governments for mutual recognition of standards

India and Kyrgyzstan share a relationship rooted in history, culture, and civilisational affinity. The Silk Road that once connected our lands is not merely a memory; it is a symbol of potential. Today, in a rapidly globalising and interconnected world, it is time to rediscover that spirit of cooperation and translate it into tangible economic outcomes. Bilateral trade between India and Kyrgyzstan has grown steadily. India has emerged as a reliable supplier in pharmaceuticals, apparel, and chemicals, as well as medical equipment, carpets, meat products, and floating structures. Kyrgyzstan offers promising opportunities in minerals, agriculture, aircraft and ship parts, and organic produce. Kyrgyz investments and products can also find enthusiastic markets in India's vast consumer base.



View of B2B Meetings held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

After visiting the two countries, it is clear we must move beyond traditional trade baskets. India's strength in IT, renewable energy, education services, and healthcare solutions can complement Kyrgyzstan's aspirations for modernisation and digital transformation. A dedicated India–Central Asia air freight



Group photo with Mr Birender Kumar Yadav, Ambassador of India to Kyrgyzstan (Centre); Ms Sunita Tatwal, Dy Director, FIEO; Ms Asel Ibraimova, Head, Trade Intelligence Department, Ministry of Economy and Commerce), Bishkek; Representatives from the Chamber of Commerce; Mr Azzamek Jeenbaiuulu, Executive Director, JIA Business Association and Embassy officials

corridor or digital trade bridge could revolutionise logistics.

The future lies in empowering small and medium enterprises. We must facilitate joint ventures, B2B dialogues, and co-innovation platforms between Indian and Kyrgyz start-ups and MSMEs. On both sides, FIEO will work to simplify regulatory frameworks, improve customs efficiency, and ensure transparent trade facilitation to encourage mutual investments.

FIEO will play its part in facilitating trade missions, hosting buyer–seller meets, and resolving bottlenecks in collaboration with our counterparts in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. We are ready to serve as a bridge between two vibrant economies. The delegation's visit to Bishkek and Tashkent was highly productive and reaffirmed the untapped potential for Indian exports in Central Asia. Continued engagement, improved connectivity, and proactive support mechanisms will be critical in unlocking these markets for Indian businesses.

FIEO will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping and supporting India's trade engagements in the region. ■

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promotional videos, condensing information, synthesis of complex data, and many more uses. Notably featured were Notebook LLM, Gemini, ChatGPT, Claude, and Perplexity. The interactive session drew several questions:

Q. Which is the best website for generating prompts for content creation of business catalogues?
A. There are multiple websites. But Napkin AI is the most user friendly for this purpose, along with Gamma.

Q. Does AI use personal data?
A. Paid AI application does not use personal data. In case of Free AI, personal data is collected through web-cookies.

Q. How do we compare two sets of large-sized quantitative data sets using AI?
A: Paste the data into Google Sheet. Ask AI to write up a V-lookup function, for comparing the data, to identify similarities and differences in entries.

Q. Is there any way of using AI for Export documentation?
A: It depends on the specific need of the exporter with regard to export documentation. You may type in a request in Gemini for creating prompt for your need and then use it in Chat GPT.

Mr Gupta suggested that follow-up sessions on AI would be useful for exporters.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks from Ms Nandwani. ■

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two slabs—5% and 18%—while exempting or lowering taxes on essential and packaged food items. A short presentation on GST 2.0 was screened to illustrate the benefits for food and agri businesses.

About 25 Indian companies displayed a wide array of products, including spices, millets, frozen and ready-to-cook foods, organic produce, rice, jaggery, flours, beverages, and processed foods. Ambassador Jacob commended FIEO and delegation leader Mr Seth for leading a focused initiative.

India–Bahrain bilateral trade stood at USD 1.64 billion in 2024–25, with two-way investments surpassing USD 2 billion in the first quarter of 2025. In July 2025, India further facilitated business ties by introducing e-visas across nine categories for Bahraini nationals.



Buyer Seller Meet in progress held in Bahrain

A large number of Bahraini companies attended the Buyer-Seller Meet on Day 1, followed by meetings with LULU Group and other leading retail chains such as Hypermax, Megamart, and Al Jazeera on Day 2, marking another step forward in strengthening India's food and agri export footprint in the Gulf region. ■

Women-Led Trade Empowered



Session at Indore: Mr Amit Kumar Baretha, Head, FIEO (M P Chapter); Mr Anurag Jain, Faculty, Exim INDO; Ms Hema, Assistant DGFT, Indore; Ms Ananya Mishra, Asst Manager, ECGC Limited, Indore and Ms Vandana Gujrati, Vice Chair Person, FICCI FLO Indore

Ms Mitali Chatterjee, former Director General (Software QA and Cyber Security Management), Ministry of Electronics and IT, has said that recovering from cyber incidents can be prohibitively costly. She noted that no enterprise, regardless of size, is immune from cyber threats. Awareness and best practices, she said, are vital shields against cybercrime. She was speaking at the SheTrades India Hub, hosted by FIEO, were three impactful programmes to strengthen women-led businesses in international trade were organised. These included a webinar on Cyber Security in International Trade for Women-led Businesses on August 26, 2025, a session on Export Procedures and Documentation on September 19, 2025 at Indore, and a webinar on Export Readiness and Opportunities the same day.

Ms Chatterjee added that data security is central in today's world. Loss of customer, employee, financial, or sensitive business data can trigger financial penalties, disruption, reputational loss, and operational setbacks. As most breaches arise from human error—weak passwords, mishandled data, or malicious links—awareness and training are essential. She advised enterprises to implement controls, secure hardware, and introduce surveillance for access monitoring.

Ms Juin Choudhury, Coordinator, SheTrades India Hub and Assistant Director, FIEO (ER), moderated the session, which drew a positive response.

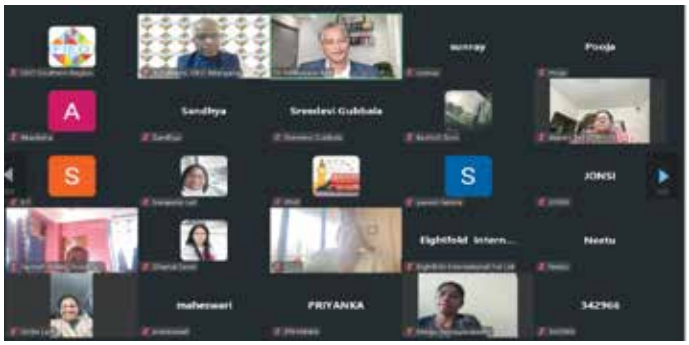
The Indore session was focused on strengthening women exporters through better documentation and procedures. The programme targeted MSMEs, start-ups, artisans, and new exporters, highlighting the role of e-commerce in international trade and aligning with the Government's ease of exports agenda.

Speakers included Mr Amit Kumar Baretha, Head, FIEO (MP Chapter); Mr Anurag Jain, Faculty, Exim INDO; Ms Hema, Assistant DGFT, Indore; Ms Ananya Mishra, Assistant Manager, ECGC; and Ms Vandana Gujrati, Vice Chairperson, FICCI FLO Indore. The panel outlined FIEO services, DGFT schemes, ECGC risk cover, and the importance of error-free documentation. The session, attended by 45 participants, gave women-led MSMEs valuable tools to compete globally. The momentum continued with an online session on export readiness and opportunities. Dr V.B.S.S. Koteswara Rao, CEO, Global Exim Institute, walked participants through the export journey—from obtaining an IEC to identifying buyers, conducting research, handling enquiries, and managing logistics. He showcased success stories of women entrepreneurs to encourage participants to explore global markets.

On his part, Mr R. Kulkarni, Head, FIEO (Telangana Chapter), reaffirmed that SheTrades India Hub, hosted by FIEO, is a dedicated platform offering tailored training, mentorship, and capacity-building workshops for women entrepreneurs, preparing them for global trade participation. Digitalisation of MSMEs is revolutionising efficiency, productivity, and market access, enabling them to compete with larger firms. As digital trade expands, cyber security has become a pressing concern. Against this backdrop, SheTrades India Hub conducted its August webinar on cyber safety for women entrepreneurs. ■



Ms Mitali Chatterjee, ex Director General (Software QA and Cyber Security Management), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, GoI giving presentation during session held on August 26, 2025



View of the Online Session held on September 19, 2025



Session at Indore: View of the participants

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FOCUS MARKET

NETHERLANDS



With Inputs from H E Mr Kumar Tuhin, Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of the Netherlands



India and the Netherlands share a deep-rooted economic relationship dating back over 400 years, beginning with the arrival of the Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie, VOC) in 1604. The VOC established trading posts across India, marking the start of enduring Indo-Dutch commercial engagement. Today, the Netherlands is one of India's most significant economic partners in Europe. It was India's largest merchandise trading partner in the EU and the 11th largest globally, with total bilateral trade reaching USD 27.33 billion. In FY 2024–25, the Netherlands moved up to become India's 9th largest global trading partner, with trade amounting to USD 27.78 billion. India maintains a strong trade surplus of USD 17.74 billion.

The Netherlands is India's third-largest export destination globally (after the USA and UAE) and the top in Europe. Major Indian exports include petroleum products, telecom equipment, pharmaceuticals, organic chemicals, ready-made garments, iron & steel, and aluminium products. Imports from the Netherlands feature electronic components, scientific and dairy equipment, vegetable oils, plastics, and specialty chemicals. Investment flows are another key pillar of the relationship. The Netherlands is the 4th largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India, with cumulative FDI of USD 52.26 billion (April 2000–Sept 2024). Top sectors receiving Dutch FDI include services, IT, and manufacturing, with Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Delhi, and Gujarat leading as destination states.

Conversely, the Netherlands is also the 4th largest destination for Indian Overseas Direct Investment (ODI), attracting USD 25.85 billion in cumulative investments between April 2000 and September 2024. Indian companies have invested in financial services, agri-business, manufacturing, and logistics. Notable examples include Tata Steel, Infosys, OYO, Dr. Reddy's, and the Serum Institute of India. Over 300 Dutch companies such as Philips, Heineken, DSM, AkzoNobel, and KLM operate in India. Likewise, over 300 Indian firms including TCS, HCL, Wipro, and Sun Pharma have a presence in the Netherlands. This mutual footprint reflects the strength and potential of Indo-Dutch commercial ties. With shared priorities in water management, clean energy, agri-tech, healthcare, and digital innovation, India and the Netherlands are well-positioned to scale up their trade and investment partnership in the years ahead.

TABLE 1: INDIA-NETHERLANDS BILATERAL TRADE

Financial Year	Amount (in USD Billion)				% Share in India's Total Trade	Netherlands' Rank as India's Trading Partner
	Export	Import	Total Trade	Trade Balance		
2019-2020	8.366	3.391	11.757	(+) 4.975	1.49	19
2020-2021	6.473	3.318	9.791	(+) 3.155	1.43	21
2021-2022	12.544	4.478	17.022	(+) 8.066	1.64	19
2022-2023	21.618	5.961	27.580	(+) 15.657	2.36	11
2023-2024	22.369	4.966	27.335	(+) 17.403	2.45	11
2024-2025	22.761	5.018	27.779	(+) 17.743	-	-

Sources:

1) Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIS), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India
(https://ftddp.dgciskol.gov.in/dgcis/userindex.html#!/yearlytimeseries)
2) Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India
(https://tradestat.commerce.gov.in/eidb/default.asp)

Recent Visits

- **2025 (May):** Indian External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar visited the Netherlands, holding talks on trade, technology, defense, and global strategic issues.
- **2025 (April):** Dutch Foreign Minister Caspar Veldkamp visited India to strengthen cooperation in climate, trade, and multilateral engagement.
- **2023 (September):** Prime Minister Mark Rutte led a Dutch Trade Mission to Bengaluru; 27 MoUs were signed in tech, health, and agriculture.
- **2023 (August):** Dutch Minister Liesje Schreinemacher participated in the G20 Trade and Investment Ministers Meeting in Jaipur.
- **2022 (April):** The President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, paid a visit to the Netherlands and engaged with Dutch start-ups and SMEs working in AI, clean energy, assistive technology, and biomedical devices. Multiple MoUs on bilateral cooperation were extended.

Bilateral Trade in Services

India and the Netherlands also enjoy strong and growing trade in services, particularly in IT, engineering, finance, and logistics. Dutch

TABLE 2: TOP INDIAN EXPORTS TO THE NETHERLANDS

No.	Items	Value From World (USD)	Value From India (USD)	% share of India in Total Export
1.	Petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous minerals	98977	1777	1.79
2.	Other instruments and apparatus for telecommunication	41046	898	2.18
3.	Articles of Apparel and clothing accessories	24694	625	2.73
4.	Drugs and medicines	35288	526	1.49
5.	Organic chemical products	45037	384	2.15

TABLE 3: TOP INDIAN IMPORTS FROM THE NETHERLANDS

No.	Items	Value From World (USD)	Value From India (USD)	% share of India in Total Export
1.	Metal ores and metal scraps	48131	423	0.88
2.	Electrical appliances, n.a.	48092	361	0.75
3.	Instruments and apparatus for science	22865	342	1.50
4.	Organic chemical products	23857	247	1.04
5.	Various machines, n.a.	30236	246	0.81

Sources: *Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek, Statline*

companies benefit from India's skilled workforce in software and consultancy services. At the same time, Indian firms utilize the Netherlands as a strategic base for expanding into areas such as water management in agriculture and as a gateway to Europe. With over 300 Indian companies operating in the Netherlands and a reciprocal presence of Dutch multinationals in India, services trade continues to be a key enabler of bilateral economic integration.

Bilateral Trade in Goods

The Netherlands is India's largest trading partner in the European Union and among its top ten globally. In FY 2024–25, total merchandise trade between the two countries reached USD 27.78 billion, with India maintaining a strong trade surplus of USD 17.74 billion. India's key exports to the Netherlands include petroleum products, pharmaceuticals, telecom equipment, organic chemicals, and garments, while imports primarily consist of metals, electronic components, instruments and apparatus for science, organic chemical products, and various machinery.

There are several goods that the Netherlands currently imports in significant quantities from countries such as the United States, Germany, China, and other EU member states, but either does not import from India or imports only in minimal amounts. However, India possesses both the capacity and potential to expand its exports of these products to the Dutch market. Key sectors with untapped export opportunities include natural and industrial gases, road transport vehicles, office and data processing machines, scientific instruments and apparatus, various chemicals, cereals and cereal products, generators and engines, as well as essential oils, perfumes, soaps, and cleaning products. Strengthening India's export presence in these categories could enhance trade relations and diversify the Netherlands' import sources.

Bilateral Investment

There are over 300 Dutch companies present in India, including major players like Royal Philips, Signify, Akzo Nobel, Royal DSM, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Rabobank, Heineken, Tom Tom, Paques, Boskalis, Van Oord, Damen Shipyards, Vopak, Aegon, Koppert, Rijk Zwaan, etc. Similarly, there are over 300 Indian companies present in the Netherlands, including all the major IT companies such as TCS, HCL, Wipro, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, as well as Tata Steel, Sun Pharmaceuticals, Dr. Reddy's, Aurobindo Pharma, LT Foods, Nature Bio Foods, Solis (Sonalika), Mittal Steel and United Phosphorus Limited (UPL). We also have the headquarters of the Indian PSU 'ONGC Nile Ganga B.V.' in the Netherlands.

Indian companies have made major acquisitions in the Netherlands like hotel company 'OYO Hotels and Homes', the acquisition of Amsterdam-based vacation rental firm @ Leisure Group in 2018, Tata Steel's purchase of Anglo-Dutch 'Corus' in 2007,Ola Electric's acquisition of Dutch electric scooter company 'Etergo' in 2020, Apollo Tyres' acquisition of Dutch tyre maker Vredestein Banden in 2009, Aspire Systems' acquisition of Dutch-Polish software solutions firm Goyello in 2018, and the purchase of the Dutch company Dutch Vaccine Institute, NVI (Bilthoven Biologicals - BBio) by the Serum Institute of India in 2012.

The Netherlands is the fourth largest source of FDI into India (after Mauritius, Singapore and USA) with a cumulative FDI equity inflow of USD 53.302 billion (INR 3,62,988 crore) from April 2000 to March 2025, accounting for 7% of the total FDI equity inflow into India. The FDI equity inflows from the Netherlands during the F.Y. 2024-2025 amounted USD 4.620 billion (INR 38,806 crore).The highest FDI equity inflow to India from the Netherlands has been in the 'Services Sector' followed by 'Computer Software & Hardware' and 'Metallurgical Industries' sectors. The State of Maharashtra received the highest equity FDI from the Netherlands, followed by Jharkhand, Karnataka, Delhi, and Gujarat. These five States account for 86.25% of the total equity FDI received from the Netherlands.

Overseas Direct Investment (ODI) Outflows

During the period April 2000 till October 2024, the Netherlands is the fourth largest destination (after Singapore, Mauritius & USA) of foreign investment (Overseas Direct Investments - ODI) by Indian companies with a cumulative

TABLE 4: FDI EQUITY INFLOWS TO INDIA FROM THE NETHERLANDS

Financial Year (March-April)	Amount in USD Million (INR in Crores)
2019-2020	6,500 (46,071)
2020-2021	2,789 (20,830)
2021-2022	4,620 (34,442)
2022-2023	2,498 (19,855)
2023-2024	4,924 (40,733)
2024-2025	4,620 (38,806)

Sources: *Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India* (https://dpiit.gov.in/publications/fdi-statistics)

ODI outflows of USD 25.853 billion accounting for 8% of total overseas investments. In F.Y. 2023-2024, the Netherlands was the fifth largest destination (after Singapore, USA, UK & UAE) for ODI from India with investments of USD 1,107 million. In F.Y. 2024-2025, the Netherlands is the fourth largest destination (after Singapore, USA & UAE) for ODI from India with investments of USD 1561 million. In the Netherlands, the sectors of 'Financial, Insurance and Business Services', 'Agriculture and Mining', 'Manufacturing' and 'Wholesale, Retail Trade, Restaurants and Hotels' attract the maximum ODI from India with investments of USD 1561 million.

In the Netherlands, the sectors of 'Financial, Insurance and Business Services', 'Agriculture and Mining', 'Manufacturing' and 'Wholesale, Retail Trade, Restaurants and Hotels' attract the maximum ODI from India.

Trade Fairs ••

- **ONE Conference 30 September – 1 October 2025:** Europe's prime cybersecurity event. A leading platform for sharing knowledge, best practices, and research results. https://one-conference.nl/
- **Vakantiebeurs 8 – 11 January, 2026:** The largest travel event in the Benelux. https://www.vakantiebeurs.nl/en/
- **World Hydrogen Summit 19 - 21 May, 2026:** Focused on hydrogen energy across technology, policy, and industry deployment. High strategic value for Indian energy firms and government-backed innovations in the hydrogen sector. https://www.world-hydrogen-summit.com/world/en-gb.html
- **Money20/20 Europe 2 - 4 June 2026:** A fintech conference and exhibition, with 8,500+ attendees and global financial leaders. An opportunity for Indian fintech startups and incumbents exploring Europe-bound opportunities or partnerships. https://europe.money2020.com/
- **GreenTech Amsterdam 9 - 11 June, 2026:** Focuses on horticulture and agriculture technology: greenhouse automation, precision farming, sustainability innovations. Particularly valuable for Indian agritech and horticulture stakeholders. https://www.greentech.nl/amsterdam
- **Breakbulk Europe 16 – 18 June, 2026:** The world's largest project cargo and breakbulk event. https://europe.breakbulk.com/home

TABLE 5: ODI OUTFLOWS FROM INDIA TO THE NETHERLANDS

Financial Year	Amount in USD Million
2013-2014	1,774.43
2014-2015	731.78
2015-2016	994.60
2016-2017	743.71
2017-2018	1143.34
2018-2019	1105.06
2019-2020	1232.56
2020-2021	1,267.00
2021-2022	1,020.00
2022-2023	984.00
2023-2024	1,107.00
2024-2025	1561.00
April 2000 – March 2025 (Cumulative ODI)	26,569.00

Sources: *Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Ministry of Finance, Government of India* (https://dea.gov.in/overseas-direct-investment) *and Reserve Bank of India* (https://rbi.org.in/Scripts/Data_Overseas_Investment.aspx)

Trade MoU's/ Agreements relevant for Indian Companies ••

- MoU on the establishment of a Joint Trade and Investment Committee (JTIC) signed in May 2025. The JTIC provides a structured basis for an economic dialogue between India and the Netherlands to discuss and facilitate further expansion of bilateral trade and investment.
- The Fast Track Mechanism (FTM) was established in 2002. The key objective of the FAST-TRACK System is to pave the way for and identify and solve problems faced by Indian and Dutch companies and investors with their operations in the Netherlands and India, respectively. The FAST-TRACK System will also serve as a platform for discussing general suggestions from the Indian and Dutch companies and investors with regard to ease of doing business in both countries. ■

E-commerce and Digital Marketing



Presentation given by officials of Indian Customs, Kolkata

With an objective to facilitate upskilling, FIEO organised a 'Comprehensive Certificate Course in International Trade', in virtual mode, from August 25 to September 17, 2025. The course has been developed with a practical-oriented curriculum covering major tenets of international business, policy and procedure updates. The course included topics such as structure of the Foreign Trade Policy and Export Incentives, Customs rules and procedures. A session on E-commerce and Digital Marketing was also included. Other subjects included GST Procedures and Documentation, Certificate of Origin-Rules and Procedures, Export Logistics. Export Finance and Banking, Credit risk management, identifying focused international markets for exports, International Product Standards and Certification for Exports, Export Pricing. The participants were also taught how to use Indian Trade Portal and Indian Business Portal, as reference for their export business requirements. To provide the participants with a more practical-oriented learning experience, senior officials from government departments and industry experts were engaged, to deliberate on the topics being covered in the course. Participants who had enrolled for the course were new entrepreneurs, working executives from junior to mid-management level, and students, from across India.

The participants provided encouraging feedback on the course. They requested FIEO to organise more sessions on E-Commerce and Digital Marketing for Exports, Export Logistics, Export Finance and Letter of Credit Mechanism. ■

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MSMEs' Export Business Development



Ms Kayalvizhi, Assistant Director, MSME-DFO, Coimbatore addressing participants. Sitting on dais: Mr Rajendran, Assistant Director, MSME-DFO, Coimbatore; Mr Anand Mohan Mishra, JDGFT, Coimbatore; Mr Suresh Babuji, Joint Director & Head of Office, MSME-DFO, Chennai and Mr Swaminathan, Head, FIEO (Coimbatore Chapter)

Mr Anand Mohan Mishra, JDGFT, Coimbatore, has said that the Government of India has set an ambitious target of USD 2 trillion in exports, comprising USD 1 trillion in goods and USD 1 trillion in services. He stressed that MSMEs play a vital role in the national economy and generate significant employment opportunities. He was speaking in the capacity of Chief Guest at a National Seminar on Export Business Development for MSMEs that organised by MSME-DFO in collaboration with FIEO on September 3, 2025, at Coimbatore. The programme, held under the Procurement and Marketing Support (PMS) Scheme of the Ministry, aimed at enhancing the marketability of MSME products and services and encouraging participation in exports through innovative and modern trade channels.



Mr Shivashankar, Senior Superintendent of Post Office, Coimbatore addressing the participants

Mr Suresh Babuji, Joint Director and Head of Office, MSME-DFO, Chennai, delivered the presidential address and said the MSME department is conducting such national seminars on export business extensively across India. He emphasised that there are several benefits available to MSMEs once they enrol under UDYAM certification.

Mr Shivaraman, Export Import Consultant, led the main session and explained the exporter registration process, identifying potential markets and buyers using available data, INCOTerms, shipping logistics, and legal aspects of export. Ms Hari Priya, Young Professional, JDGFT office, Coimbatore, made a presentation on the roles of DGFT and benefits under Free Trade Agreements. She explained how to apply for an Importer Exporter Code (IEC) through the DGFT portal and outlined mandatory documents. She also highlighted schemes such as EPCG and AAS that allow exporters to import machinery, raw material, and components duty-free.



View of the participants

Mr Dinesh Janakiraman, Sales Specialist, Amazon Global Selling, explained the documents required for AGS registration, product listing for better reach, and starting advertisements to boost sales. He elaborated on two primary modes of selling—Fulfilment by Amazon (FBA), where Amazon manages logistics, and Merchant Fulfilled Network (MFN), where exporters handle logistics directly or through third parties. Mr Rithesh, Executive Officer, ECGC Ltd, Coimbatore, spoke about mitigating credit risk in exports. He outlined policies available depending on business size and buyer profile, with ECGC providing claims between 80% and 100% under various schemes.

Mr Shivashankar, Senior Superintendent of Post Office, Coimbatore, presented India Post's services for small-volume exporters. He explained that exporters can use nearby post offices and benefit from "Dak Ghar Niryat Kendra," where parcel charges are based on actual weight rather than volumetric weight. Mr Rajendran, Assistant Director – Grade I & DDO, MSME-DFO, Coimbatore, spoke on availing loans and eligibility criteria. He explained the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE), jointly set up by MSME and SIDBI, to catalyse the flow of institutional credit to small enterprises.

Mr Swaminathan, Head, FIEO (Coimbatore Chapter), presented FIEO's wide-ranging services, including seminars, workshops, three-day certificate courses, and updates on global trends, all aimed at supporting exporters. He stressed that government schemes and incentives are key to making exporters competitive in the global market and also noted that the Seminar was designed to provide maximum inputs for budding exporters. He also delivered the vote of thanks. ■

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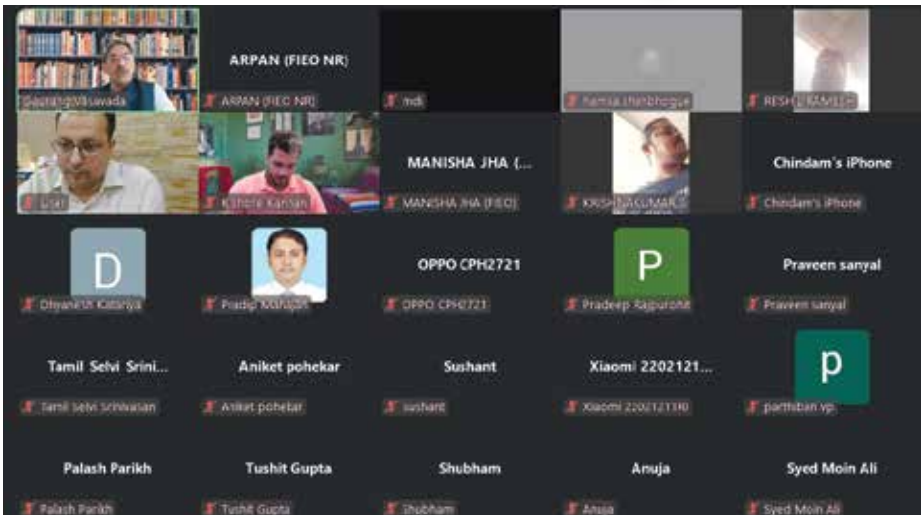
Financing of Export LC



View of the participants

Mr Gaurang Vasavada, Trainer and Consultant in Forex, Trade, and International Banking, has said that Letters of Credit (LCs) reduce risk and provide exporters with secure financing options. He was speaking at an online session on Understanding Financing of Export LC – with Rules Governing LC Transactions that was organised by FIEO on August 28, 2025, and attended by more than 70 exporters and officials from local trade bodies.

The session also featured Mr Anish Mahto, Trade SME – Trade Finance, ICICI Bank, and Ms Manisha Jha, Deputy Director, FIEO. It aimed to enhance understanding of LCs as a secure and effective financing tool in international trade, with a focus on the rules and best practices governing LC transactions.

The objective was to empower MSME exporters with practical knowledge of LC mechanisms, regulatory frameworks (including UCPDC 600), documentation requirements, and risk mitigation strategies. This would enable exporters to access affordable finance, reduce risks, and navigate global trade with greater confidence and compliance.

Mr Vasavada provided a comprehensive overview of how Letters of Credit can be effectively used as a financing tool in international trade. He explained the basic concept of an LC—a financial instrument where a buyer's bank guarantees payment to the seller upon presentation of specified compliant documents. This mechanism reduces risk for both parties: the seller is assured of payment, while the buyer is assured of receiving goods that meet agreed specifications.

The presentation outlined the key parties involved in an LC transaction, such as the applicant, issuing bank, beneficiary, advising bank, and others.

> "Letters of Credit (LCs) reduce risk and provide exporters with secure financing options."

Mr Vasavada also detailed the various types of LCs, including sight, usance, transferable, revolving, red clause, and green clause credits. He explained how LCs facilitate export finance, particularly through negotiation of bills under LC without the need for separate credit limits for exporters.

He emphasised the importance of UCPDC 600, a globally accepted set of rules governing LC operations. He discussed its critical provisions, such as rules around document compliance, amendments, discrepant documents, insurance, tolerances, and instalment shipments. Special attention was given to transferable LCs and their usefulness in triangular or intermediary trade.

The session continued with a practical checklist of do's and don'ts for exporters and importers, stressing thorough documentation, due diligence on buyers and suppliers, and a strong understanding of issuing bank credibility. In essence, the presentation offered exporters clear, actionable insights into leveraging LCs for secure and effective trade financing.

Mr Mahto shared insights on financing options available to MSMEs and introduced a robust suite of services designed to streamline business operations in today's fast-moving global market. With ICICI Bank's digital solutions, businesses can manage trade transactions seamlessly online, eliminating the need for physical paperwork. Services such as instant Export Packing Credit (EPC), paperless Bank Guarantee issuance, and real-time transaction tracking help reduce turnaround times and improve efficiency.

The platform also offers easy foreign exchange conversions, export credit disbursements, and step-by-step guidance for initiating digital transactions, making banking simpler and faster.

He further highlighted ICICI Bank's specialised services, including Diamond Dollar Accounts (DDA) and EEFC accounts for businesses in sectors such as SEZs or precious metals. The platform's global trade database allows businesses to verify buyers and sellers while optimising logistics. Additional benefits include access to government incentives, trade insurance, and real-time treasury reports. With personalised advisory services, preferential pricing, and expert relationship managers, ICICI ensures that businesses remain ahead of market trends and regulatory changes, enabling smarter and faster decision-making.

Ms Jha had earlier in her welcome note explained FIEO's role in supporting Indian exporters through export documentation assistance, training programmes, market access, policy advocacy, and government scheme benefits.

The presentation concluded with an engaging Q&A session, where exporters raised concerns related to shipping, documentation, existing schemes, expected new policies, discrepancies, and guidance on whom to approach for resolving specific issues. ■

Merchant Trade Transactions



Mr Gaurang Vasavada, Trainer giving presentation. Ms Manisha Jha, Deputy Director, FIEO (NR) also seen

Mr Gaurang Vasavada, Trainer and Consultant in Forex, Trade, and International Banking, has said that Merchant Trade Transactions (MTTs) allow Indian firms to expand trade globally without goods entering India. MTTs he said are neither exports from India nor imports into India. Rather, they involve the movement of goods from one foreign country to another, without entering India's Domestic Tariff Area (DTA), with an Indian intermediary facilitating the transaction, including handling of funds and documentation. He was speaking at an online session on Doing Merchant Trade Transactions – Guidelines, Issues, and Resolutions that was organised by FIEO on August 12, 2025, and attended by more than 50 exporters and officials from local trade bodies.

The session also featured Ms Manisha Jha, Deputy Director, FIEO (NR), who delivered the welcome address. The objective of the session was to highlight how MTTs offer a unique opportunity for Indian businesses to expand global trade without the physical movement of goods into or out of India. However, these transactions require specific compliance and documentation, as mandated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT). The session aimed to demystify the concept of MTTs, ensure regulatory compliance, and address practical issues faced by exporters during such transactions.

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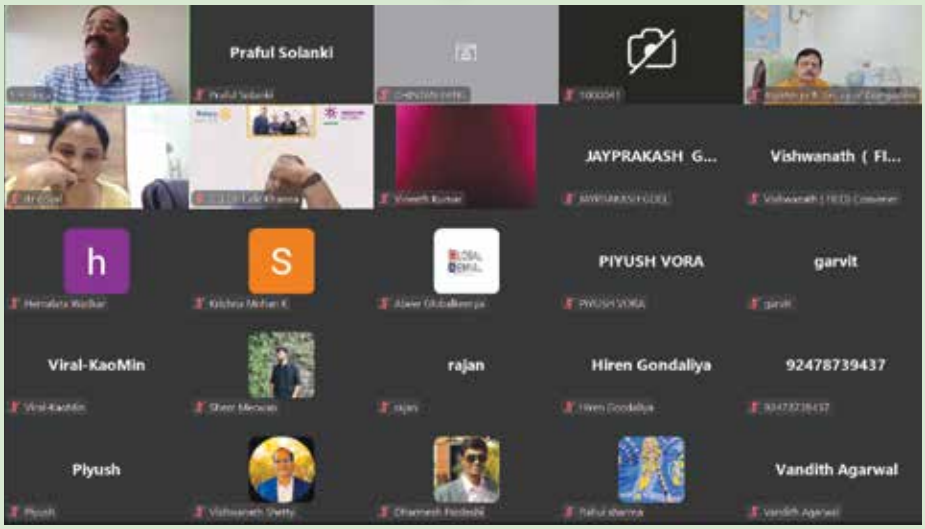
Logistics and Shipping



View of the participants

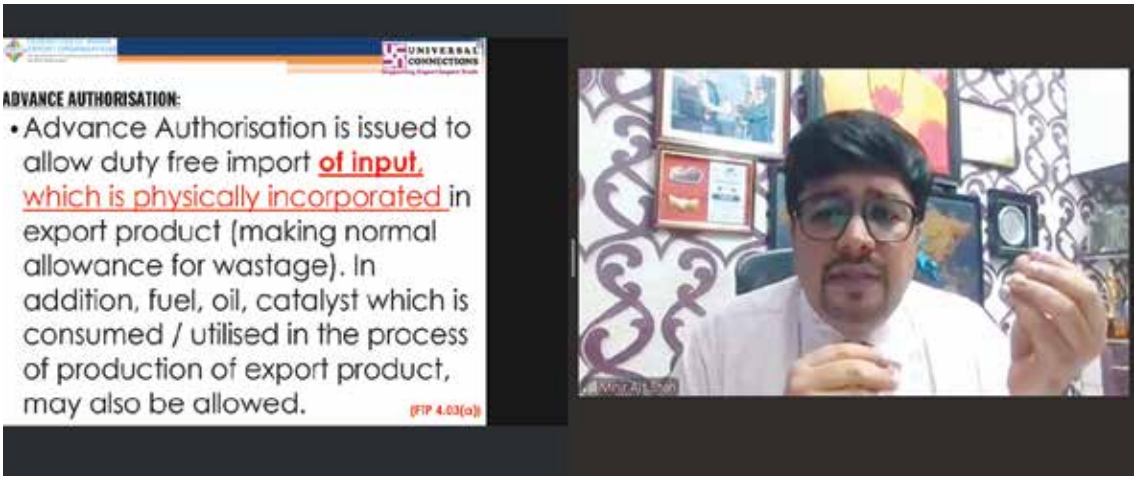
Prof Shailendra R Binju, Expert Faculty, has observed that transportation and communication have brought the world closer, converting restricted local trade into global trade. With no limits on distance or location, suppliers can receive enquiries from anywhere, but overseas suppliers face challenges compared to local ones who enjoy delivery-time and logistics-cost advantages.

He explained basic concepts of "Logistics & Shipping", highlighting key points with examples to optimise logistics and shipping costs in today's challenging international business scenario. He was speaking at a Webinar on Cost Reduction Techniques in Logistics & Shipping for Exporters organised by FIEO on August 21, 2025 in Gujarat. Around 69 participants were in attendance.

Further, Mr Binju examined inbound logistics, explaining procurement, inventory management, and transportation optimisation. He stressed the importance of efficient management for better operational efficiency and cost reduction. He also provided insights into minimising logistics and shipping expenses through route optimisation, technology integration, and regulatory compliance. Participants learned about ship categories (e.g., container ships, bulk carriers, tankers) and container types (e.g., dry, refrigerated, open-top), understanding cargo suitability. He explained choosing appropriate Incoterms by exporters/importers and using them as tools for cost optimisation.

Earlier, Mr Vishwanath Sreenivasan, Director, VCPL, Vadodara welcomed Prof Binju; Mr Jayprakash Goel, Head, FIEO (Gujarat Chapter) and all participants. He explained the services provided by FIEO and urged participants to become members to avail benefits. He outlined the conference objectives and requested active participation to enhance knowledge in securing exports. The vote of thanks was delivered by Mr Goel. ■

Advance Authorisation Explained



Mr Mihir Ajit Shah, Guest Speaker from M/s Universal Connections LLP giving presentation

Mr Mihir Ajit Shah, Guest Speaker from M/s Universal Connections LLP, has pointed out that Advance Authorisation (AA) is a vital tool for exporters to reduce input costs and enhance competitiveness.

He was speaking at an online session on Understanding the Authorisation Scheme for Export that was organised by FIEO on August 29, 2025 that was attended by over 50 exporters and officials from local trade bodies.

Earlier, Ms Rita Hans from FIEO, had introduced the speaker. The objective of the session was to educate exporters on the Advance Authorisation Scheme.

A thorough understanding of this scheme and its terms can help exporters minimise costs, meet export obligations, and ensure smooth customs procedures, ultimately enhancing efficiency and competitiveness in international trade.

Detailed Overview ••

Mr Shah provided a comprehensive explanation of the AA scheme which allows exporters to import inputs duty-free, provided they are physically incorporated into the final export product, with allowances made for wastage.

This scheme covers a wide array of inputs, including raw materials, fuel, oil, and catalysts used in production. The imports under AA are exempted from various duties such as Basic Customs Duty (BCD), Additional Customs Duty, Education Cess, and Anti-dumping Duty, except in specific cases as outlined under FTP 4.03(a) and FTP 4.14.

A critical aspect of this scheme is the requirement for minimum value addition, generally set at 15%, but higher percentages (such as 50% for tea) are specified for certain sectors.

> "Advance Authorisation (AA) is a vital tool for exporters to reduce input costs and enhance competitiveness."

Exporters must also adhere to the Standard Input Output Norms (SION), and in cases where no norms are available, they can apply under Adhoc Norms on a self-declared basis.

Exporters need to meet export obligations within a fixed period, typically 18 months, with provisions for extensions upon payment of a composition fee.

Mr Shah also elaborated on the operational requirements for Advance Authorisation, emphasising the need for exporters to prepare detailed documentation for a smooth application process.

This includes a valid RCMC, updated GST registration, MSME certifications, CA certificates, and details of both import and export goods, including HS Codes and FOB/CIF values in alignment with SION.

The scheme allows for one revalidation of the authorisation for an additional 12 months, providing exporters with some flexibility.

Furthermore, exporters must meet export obligations and may request extensions, subject to specific composition fees.

He also explained the Duty-Free Import Authorisation (DFIA) scheme, which is primarily focused on post-export benefits. DFIA offers exemption only from Basic Customs Duty (BCD) on inputs used in export production.

Unlike Advance Authorisation, which offers exemptions on a wide range of duties, DFIA is more restrictive and allows benefits only after the export has been completed.

The key distinction between the two schemes lies in their operation: Advance Authorisation permits import first and export afterwards, while DFIA is a post-export benefit. Additionally, DFIA allows transferability of the scrips, providing exporters with more flexibility in managing their imports.

However, DFIA is subject to stringent "Actual User Condition" and does not allow transfer of inputs themselves. Mr. Shah emphasised that understanding the differences between these two schemes is essential for exporters to leverage the most appropriate benefit based on their business model and export strategy.

The presentation was followed by an extensive Q&A session where exporters had the opportunity to address challenges related to shipping, documentation, existing schemes, expected new policies, and how to correct discrepancies. Participants were also guided on whom to approach for specific issues. ■

56th GST Council Meeting



View of the participants

CA Kunal Soni, Guest Speaker, has said that aligning similar goods under a common tax rate will mitigate frequent misclassification issues, particularly between the 12% and 18% slabs. The introduction of the 40% slab ensures that goods previously subjected to GST and compensation cess continue to bear the intended tax burden, even after the cess is phased out. This move is seen as a balancing act—simplifying tax structures while protecting government revenue from high-end consumption.

He was speaking at an online session on the 56th GST Council Meeting – Key Reforms & Business Implications organised by FIEO on September 11, 2025.

The session also featured CA Amrin Alwani, Guest Speaker, and the partners at Mistry & Shah LLP, along with Ms Sunita Joshi from FIEO. Over 85 exporters and officials from local trade bodies participated in the session. CA Alwani elaborated on the impact for consumer-facing sectors, stating that essential and daily-use goods such as hair oil, soaps, shampoos, and kitchenware will now attract a reduced GST rate of 5%, down from 12% or 18%. Similarly, general food items will also be taxed at 5%, a move expected to significantly reduce household expenses and enhance affordability for middle- and lower-income segments. The reforms are also expected to support trade facilitation, reduce litigation, and improve ease of doing business in the GST regime. Both guest speakers outlined the shift from the existing four-rate GST structure to a streamlined two-tier system—5% merit rate and 18% standard rate, with a 40% special demerit rate for sin and luxury goods—effective from September 22, 2025.

The experts highlighted how these changes aim to simplify compliance, reduce classification disputes, and ensure continuity of tax burden on high-end consumption post-compensation cess phase-out. Earlier, Ms Sunita Joshi of FIEO said that the objective of the session was to help businesses understand the reforms introduced during the 56th GST Council Meeting, their impact on pricing and compliance, and to prepare for a seamless transition to the new GST regime.

The session featured a comprehensive explanation of the key rate rationalisation measures proposed during the 56th GST Council Meeting. The presentation was followed by an extensive Q&A session, where exporters had the opportunity to address various challenges related to schemes, FTP, shipping, documentation, existing policies, expected new initiatives, and how to correct discrepancies. Participants were also guided on whom to approach for specific issues. ■

Continued from Page 37

Mr Vasavada explained the flowchart of goods and payments, along with specific guidelines on MTTs as issued by the RBI and DGFT. He noted that MTTs were included for the first time in the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023, and their scope has since been expanded to include the supply of goods within the same foreign country.

The MTT guidelines covered important aspects such as:

- Routing transactions through the same Authorised Dealer (AD) Bank in India
- Ensuring that the transaction remains profitable
- Adhering to prescribed timelines for forex outlay and completion
- Dealing in permissible commodities
- Applicability of other RBI guidelines
- Managing associated risks and the possibility of write-offs, if necessary

Since MTT transactions do not involve Indian Customs (no Shipping Bills or Bills of Entry are generated), AD Banks bear the responsibility for conducting due diligence on MTT traders, buyers, and suppliers in different countries. They must establish the genuineness of transactions through a thorough examination of documents.

He advised Indian MTT traders to exercise caution when entering into such trades, ensuring that transaction structures strictly adhere to all prescribed guidelines. He also emphasised the importance of protecting funds and avoiding situations where payments get stuck due to buyer defaults.

Earlier, in her welcome address, Ms Jha warmly greeted all participants and expressed her appreciation for their presence. She extended a special welcome to Mr. Gaurang Vasavada, the esteemed guest speaker of the day.

She introduced Mr. Vasavada to the audience by highlighting his professional journey and expertise. She shared key aspects of his profile, showcasing his extensive experience and accomplishments in the field, setting the stage for an insightful and enriching session.

The presentation concluded with an engaging Q&A session, during which exporters raised concerns related to shipping, documentation, existing schemes, expected new policies, discrepancies, and guidance on whom to approach for resolving specific issues. ■

Managing Credit Risk



Mr Gaurang Vasavada, Trainer and Consultant on Forex Trade and International Banking giving presentation

Mr Gaurang Vasavada, Trainer and Consultant on Forex Trade and International Banking, has provided a detailed presentation on Credit Risk for Exporters – How and Why, underlining the importance of buyer identification and the severe implications of default in international trade. He explained the value of Credit Insurance as a safeguard, alongside follow-up and recourse options for unpaid export receivables. He also detailed procedures for closing export bills in cases of partial or non-realisation of funds, in line with RBI guidelines. He further highlighted essential precautions on recovery, including buyer checks, diversification of markets, and contractual safeguards. He was speaking at a webinar on "Managing Credit Risk in Export Businesses" that was organised by FIEO in association with the ICICI Bank on September 15, 2025. The webinar drew close to 90 delegates from across regions.

On his part, Mr Bhavin Joshi of ICICI Bank showcased a suite of digital and customised banking solutions from ICICI Bank for exporters. He highlighted innovative tools such as Trade Online and Insta EPC, designed to simplify and accelerate trade transactions. Key propositions included paperless Bank Guarantee issuance, instant disbursement of Export Packing Credit (EPC), and a 24x7 digital platform for trade services.

The objective of the programme was to sensitise participating delegates on the critical aspects of managing credit risk in exports.

The session emphasised the importance of identifying and mitigating credit risks involved in overseas trade, along with the key role Credit Insurance may play as a practical tool for protection against payment defaults. The session concluded with an engaging Q&A that addressed the concerns of participating delegates. ■

Credit Risk in Exports



L-R: Mr N B Gopi, Manager, ECGC, Coimbatore; Mr. Ashis Kumar Das, Branch Manager, ECGC Ltd, Coimbatore and Mr Swaminathan, Head, FIEO (Coimbatore Chapter)

FIEO, in association with ECGC Limited, Coimbatore, organised an Exporter Meet on "Mitigation of Credit Risk in Exports by ECGC" on September 23, 2025.

The programme aimed to create awareness among exporters on effectively managing credit risk in overseas trade. Nearly 60 participants attended and benefitted from the deliberations.

Mr Ashis Kumar Das, Branch Manager, ECGC Ltd, Coimbatore, delivered the welcome address. He underlined the organisation's vision of excelling in credit insurance by offering cost-effective, trade-related services to meet the growing demands of the Indian export market through optimal resource utilisation.

Mr Ritesh Chandra, Marketing Executive, ECGC Ltd, Coimbatore, elaborated on the corporation's products and services. ECGC provides export credit insurance to both Indian exporters and banks, safeguarding against risks such as foreign buyers' non-payment due to commercial or political reasons. This support enables exporters to trade with confidence and secure easier access to finance.

Mr Swaminathan, Head of FIEO (Coimbatore Chapter), presented FIEO's bouquet of services for the export community, highlighting the advantages of membership. He stressed how FIEO, through training programmes, seminars, and workshops, keeps exporters updated on global trade developments. He also noted FIEO's robust international presence through exhibitions and B2B meetings across multiple product categories, benefitting a large section of its members. ■

PRODUCT ANALYSIS

HS CODE: 130219 (VEGETABLE SAPS AND EXTRACTS (EXCL. LIQUORICE, HOPS, OPIUM AND EPHEDRA))

- India's export of this item grew at a CAGR of 11.74% in the last 5 years alongside a positive growth of 2.09% of global imports during the same period.
- India's exports occupied an average share of around 11.70% in global imports of the item over the last 5 years.
- It is the largest exported item under the category of 1302 (Vegetable saps and extracts; pectic substances, pectinates and pectates; agar-agar and other mucilages and thickeners derived from vegetable products, whether or not modified).
- India has around 61.32% market penetration for this item from 2020-2024.

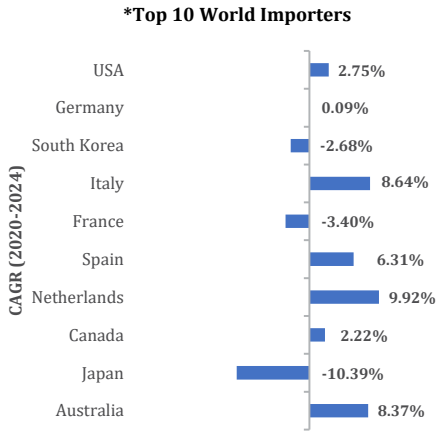




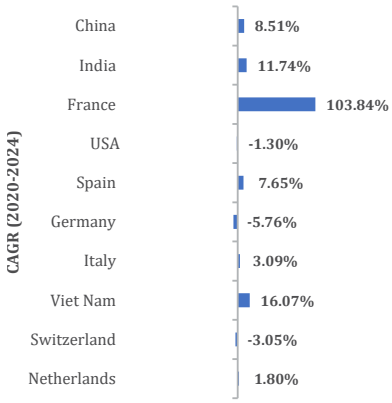


POTENTIAL OF MARKETS *(Based purely on their import as reported on ITC trade map)*			
COUNTRY	IMPORTS IN USD MILLION 2024		INDIA'S RANK AS SUPPLIER
	FROM WORLD	FROM INDIA	
Spain	129.64	8.99	5th
Netherlands	113.08	5.59	6th
Canada	110.01	8.33	4th

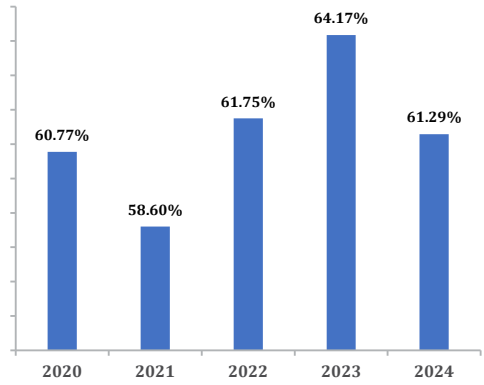
** The countries are placed in descending order in terms of their export/import value*



***Top 10 World Exporters**



Index of Market Penetration (%)



TARIFF IN POTENTIAL MARKETS			
COUNTRY	**HS CODE**	**MFN (%)**	**TRADE AGREEMENT TARIFF**
Spain, Netherlands	1302190500	3	(GSP):0%
	1302197000	0	-
Canada	1302190010, 1302190090	0	-

For feedback or product analysis for your product, please write at prashantseth@fieo.org

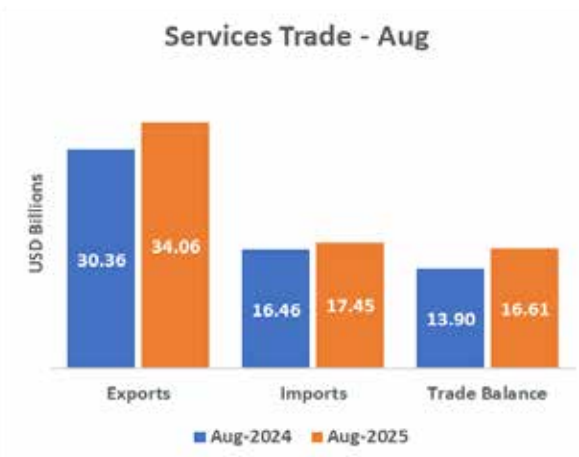
For checking country-specific corresponding product tariff data, please visit www.indiantradeportal.in



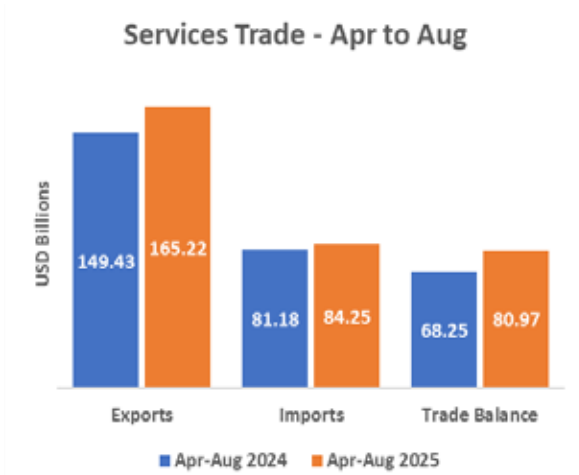
TRADE TRENDS

AUGUST 2025









Major commodities with export growth/decline in August 2025 (YoY%)

(1) Engineering Goods (4.91%)
(2) Petroleum Products (6.54%)
(3) Electronic Goods (25.93%)
(4) Drugs & Pharmaceuticals (6.94%)
(5) Organic & Inorganic Chemicals (3.76%)

(1) RMG of all Textiles (-2.65%)
(2) Cotton Yarn/Fabs./made-ups, Handloom Products etc. (-2.32%)
(3) Plastic & Linoleum (-4.27%)
(4) Man-made Yarn/Fabs./made-ups etc. (-3.08%)
(5) Tobacco (-23.71%)

Out of 30 major export commodities, 18 such commodities witnessed a positive growth which, in addition to the above, Gems & Jewellery; Rice; Marine Products; Meat, dairy & poultry products; Mica, Coal & Other Ores, Minerals including processed minerals; Leather & leather products; Ceramic products & glassware; Spices; Fruits & Vegetables; Cereal preparations & miscellaneous processed items; Tea; Oil seeds; and Other cereals.

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