UNION COMMERCE & INDUSTRY MINISTER PIYUSH GOYAL MEETS EXPORT COMMUNITY, DISCUSSES MEASURES TO BOOST EXPORTS

MINISTER EXHORTS EXPORTERS TO RISE TO THE AMBITIOUS CHALLENGE OF $400 BILLION EXPORT TARGET FOR 2021-22.AND TARGET $2 TRILLION EXPORTS BY 2030

COMMERCE MINISTER -
“WE CAN SORT OUT FTAS FAIRLY QUICKLY, IF THE AREAS WHERE WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO COMPETE INTERNATIONALLY CAN BE IDENTIFIED”

INDIA IS WORKING TOWARDS EARLY HARVEST AGREEMENTS WITH UK AND AUSTRALIA: COMMERCE MINISTER

New Delhi, 19th August 2021

The Union Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal has said that the nation is working towards making a quantum jump in merchandise exports. He said this has been made possible, thanks to the structural changes initiated by the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Minister said that the merchandise export target of $400 billion for the year 2021-22 has been set, in line with the Prime Minister’s clarion call, “Local goes Global: Make in India for the World”. The Minister said this during a meeting with Export Promotion Councils (EPCs), Commodity Boards and Authorities and other stakeholders in Mumbai today, to discuss measures to enhance and increase exports.

"The target has been generated through a bottom-up and consultative approach, wherein specific targets for each country, product, Export Promotion Council and foreign mission has been set”, said Shri Goyal.

“Act immediately to rise to the ambitious challenge of $400 billion export target”

The Minister exhorted all Export Promotion Councils to take immediate and effective steps to rise to the challenge of achieving the merchandise export target of $400 billion for 2021-22. "We need to maintain the export momentum for the next 8 months, with $34 billion exports per month to achieve this target, he informed. The goal is ambitious, but possible if all including EPCs and their members work together", added Shri Goyal.
Target $2 trillion exports by 2030
The Minister asked the export community to also target $2 trillion exports by the year 2030, comprising $1 trillion merchandise exports and $1 trillion services exports.

The Minister announced that two separate divisions are being set up in the Commerce Ministry focused on the services sector, in order to attain the $1 trillion services exports target.
New FTAs slated for early conclusion.

The Minister informed that the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) strategy is being revamped. “Free Trade Agreements are being formulated in a much more interactive process, we are engaging with industry to ensure that FTAs are fairly and equitably crafted. At the same time, FTAs cannot be a one-way traffic, we also need to open our markets, if we want a larger share in foreign markets. So, we need to identify areas where we can withstand competition. We can sort out FTAs fairly quickly, if the areas where we have the ability to compete internationally can be identified, as part of a collective effort.”

Informing about the progress of FTAs with various developed countries, the Minister informed that we are at a very positive momentum in terms of FTAs, with the UK, EU, Australia, Canada, UAE, Israel and the GCC countries. “Our effort is to ensure focus on countries where we have significant potential, where we can compete better and where market size is significant.”

Working towards Early Harvest Agreements with UK and Australia
Shri Goyal said that India is looking at identifying areas of immediate interest for India and UK, and conclude an Early Harvest Agreement with UK. Australia has shown the highest level of engagement and has shown significant interest to do an Early Harvest Agreement, this will help us engage with others too on similar lines, he informed.

On the FTA with the EU, the Minister stated that it is only due to the Prime Minister’s good will and credibility that the EU has agreed to once again engage in negotiations for an FTA. India will be working very hard to speed this up, he said.

He added: “If the FTA with UAE happens, FTAs with GCC countries too will get expedited. The USA has kind of indicated that they are not looking at new trade agreements, however, we will work with them to address market access issues on both sides, this will be a big opportunity for our export sector.

Let Quality be our mantra: Minister tells industry
The Minister exhorted the industry to study both domestic and international quality standards and work towards aligning the standards. “Let us accept and adopt quality standards voluntarily and happily and build our industries to meet global quality standards.”

Focus on shipping and semiconductor industries
The Minister spoke of two sectors which he said should occupy a more prominent role in the industrial landscape -shipping and semiconductors. He also urged the textiles industry to “Do participate in World Expo, Dubai”
The Minister said that World Expo is going to be a big opportunity for Indian industry. “The Indian Pavilion at World Expo, Dubai is going to be absolutely fabulous, it will make you proud, I can assure you.”

“Time to take exports to the next level”
The Minister told the export community that they - Export Promotion Councils, and Commodity Boards can play a key role in export promotion. They can provide market intelligence, explore new markets and destinations, arrange trade fairs and buyer-seller meets, handhold exporters and work closely with Ministries/Departments, he said.

Shri Goyal told the export community that India needs to once again become “Duniya ka Bazar” and “Duniya ka Karkhana”, reclaiming its historical position as a great trading nation.

Policy Measures taken to Boost Exports
Underlining various steps taken to boost exports, the Minister recalled that the Draft National Logistics Policy has been introduced. Districts are being developed as Export Hubs and Free Trade Agreements are being fast-tracked. Compliance requirement has been reduced, Production Linked Incentive Scheme has been introduced for 13 sectors and SEZ reforms have been brought in. Trade facilitation is being done on digital platforms and a comprehensive Agriculture Export Policy has been made.

A New Foreign Trade Policy will be announced on October 1, 2021 and Indian missions abroad will play an active role in its implementation. A single-window customs clearance has been extended for exporters.

The Commerce & Industry Minister thanked all EPCs who he said have served selflessly during the challenging times of COVID-19. He recalled that India became the pharmacy of the world, supplied high-quality and critical health items and sent millions of vaccine doses. It also became a reliable supplier of food to the world during the pandemic and met all our international service commitments even during the lockdown. This has helped India earn the trust of the world, said the Minister.

Shri Goyal said "Our Exporters have made us proud by achieving record trade volumes in April- July 2021.” Exports in July 2021 was $35 billion, the highest-ever monthly export in Indian history, and an increase of 35% with respect to July 2019. Merchandise exports in Apr-July 2021 was $130 billion, an increase of 22% with respect to April-July 2019.

Speaking on the occasion,
Commerce Secretary Shri B.V.R Subrahmanyanam said, Government of India has set a very solid export target of $ 400 billion for 2021-22. The target has been arrived at through a systematic assessment of export potential. “Trade has been laid down as the top priority for our diplomats, foreign missions will help in facilitating exporters. We are working on creating state-level export commissioners, district-level export hubs and other infrastructure for export facilitation”, informed Shri Subrahmanyanam.

Engagement with states and districts is a key focus area. Through their role in District Export Promotion Councils, the EPCs should actively contribute in preparing strategy for promoting exports of identified products/services from the districts, said Shri Yadav.

The participants
The Export Promotion Councils (EPCs), Commodity Boards and Authorities present in the meeting included IOPEPC (Indian Oilseeds & Produce Export Promotion Council), EEPC India, PLEXCONCIL (The Plastics Export Promotion Council), Services Export Promotion Council, SRTEPC (Synthetic & Rayon Textiles Export Promotion Council), Export Promotion Council for EOU’s & SEZs, Powerloom Development & Export Promotion Council, Texprocil, GJEPC (Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council), AEPC (Apparel Export Promotion Council), CII, FIEO (Federation of Indian Exports Organization), Project Export Promotion Council of India and others. The EPCs and other participants joined physically in Mumbai as well as online from other places.

The Minister and senior officials of the government took note of the various issues and suggestions given by the industry and assured them to continue to address them suitably, in line with the Government’s goal of boosting exports and the economy.

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