

## **Next Foreign Trade Policy should develop untapped export potential of states**

Government of India is consulting various stakeholders before introducing Foreign Trade Policy for the next five years, as the duration of the current policy (2015-20) ended in March 2020 and it was extended till March 2021. Two days ago, senior officials from the Union Ministry of Commerce held a meeting with the Parliamentary Consultative Committee to seek views of Parliamentarians for this policy. It is expected that the new policy will focus on developing the untapped export potential in every district of the country. The government is engaging with all the state governments to set up District Export Hub and develop export plan for every district in the country.

Such district hubs should leverage the competitive advantage of every district and promote their untapped export potential. Every state and every district in the states has distinct advantage in manufacturing, services or agro-based sector. For instance, Rajasthan has rich reserves of sandstone, limestone and marble; Also, it is the major producer of blended fabric and wool, besides coarse cereals. Particularly, the Bhilwara district of Rajasthan is a prominent producer of suiting fabrics and yarn.

Assam, besides being the leading producer of tea and third largest producer of petroleum and natural gas, has potential for development of traditional medicine. The state is home to more than 300 medicinal plants and herbs. Further, the state leads in production of gold silk and its varieties such as Eri, Muga and Tussar. Assam is also blessed with 51 species of bamboo.

Haryana has untapped export potential in auto-components, textile and agro-processing sectors. The state ranks third among all landlocked states in terms of Export Preparedness Index 2020 (released by NITI Aayog). Agro-processing has untapped potential in this state because it is the leading producer of strawberry, cucumber, radish and carrot, besides being the major exporter of basmati rice. Automobile is already a well developed sector in the state as it contributes 33% of two-wheeler production, 50% of cars, 52% of cranes and 80% of excavator output of India. Strategic location of the state in the National Capital Region and the upcoming Industrial Corridors of DMIC and Amritsar-Kolkata make it more attractive for setting up export-oriented industries.

Jharkhand, which ranks fourth in Ease of Doing Business has untapped potential in exports of agro-forestry products, cashew, honey, silk products, traditional medicine, milk and meat products. The state is the second largest producer of horticulture crops in India such as cauliflower, cabbage and it grows 1.8 million tonne of superior quality surplus vegetable crops. The state's huge steel and coal resources favour setting up of automobile and cement manufacturing plants.

Manipur has untapped forest resource, especially timber and bamboo, which can support manufacturing units of furniture, toys, agarbatties (incense sticks), mats and other household articles. The state houses the largest number of handicraft units and craftsmen in the entire northeastern region. Government can promote export of handicraft and textile products through intervention such as technology upgradation and skill development. Agro-process is another potential sector in the state as it produces pineapple, orange, lemon, banana, guava, peaches and apple. The state produces an exotic variety of lemon (known as Kachai Lemon), which is accorded Geographical Indication (GI) mark for its unique taste and flavour. Manipur is also the gateway to South-East Asia as the only prominent road route for Myanmar passes through Moreh town of the state.

Similarly, Mizoram, which is another North Eastern state, is a major producer of strawberry, bamboo and flowers. The state is identified as potential hub for cultivation of oil palm and developing fish farming.

## Notifications

### PIB

Virtual Buyer-Seller meet for millet exporters

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1688228>

### DGFT

Electronic issuance of preferential certificate of origin for exports to UK under GSP

<https://content.dgft.gov.in/Website/dgftprod/a27a68f5-308c-4ea6-889e-0dafb8739752/Trade%20Notice%20-%2037.pdf>