

Indian Exporters Advised to Leverage India–UK CETA for Growth, MSMEs Urged to Tap New Markets

India–UK CETA Seen as Milestone in Bilateral Trade, DGFT Outreach Programme Engages Industry Stakeholders

DGFT Organises Outreach Programme on India–UK CETA to Boost Export Opportunities

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The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), Regional Authority Delhi, under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, hosted an outreach programme on the recently concluded India–UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.

Themed “Gateway to Growth: Harnessing Opportunities under India–UK CETA”, the event brought together senior government officials, diplomats, Export Promotion Councils (EPCs), industry leaders, and trade associations to deliberate on the transformative potential of the Agreement for Indian exporters.

Chairing the programme, Director General of Foreign Trade & Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Shri Ajay Bhadoo, underlined the strategic significance of CETA in expanding India’s footprint in the UK market. He highlighted tariff concessions, simplified market access provisions, and the scope for Indian MSMEs to integrate more strongly with global value chains.

Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, Shri Saket Kumar, provided the background and strategic context of the negotiations, emphasising the government’s commitment to creating new opportunities for Indian industry.

Adding the UK government’s perspective, Deputy Trade Commissioner, South Asia, British High Commission in India, Ms. Anna Shotbolt, described the Agreement as a “milestone in bilateral trade ties” and encouraged Indian exporters to align with sustainability and quality standards to capture premium segments of the UK market. Minister (Economic), High Commission of India in London, Ms. Nidhi Mani Tripathi, shared practical insights on emerging opportunities for Indian businesses in the UK, particularly in food, textiles, and services.

The event placed strong emphasis on sectoral perspectives through active participation from India’s leading Export Promotion Councils. Chairman, APEDA, Shri Abhishek Dev, highlighted the growing demand for Indian agri and processed food products in the UK, noting that CETA provides a gateway for India to tap into niche categories such as ethnic foods, organic produce, and ready-to-eat products. Director General, FIEO, Dr. Ajay Sahai, stressed the importance of multi-sector opportunities, urging exporters to look beyond traditional markets and adopt digital tools to reach UK buyers more efficiently.

On the services front, Chairman, ESC, Shri Veer Sagar, highlighted how India's IT and knowledge-based services can gain a sharper edge under the Agreement, while Director, SEPC, Ms. Swati Saraf, noted the potential for creative industries, education, and professional services to diversify India's services exports to the UK.

From the manufacturing and creative sectors, EPC leaders drew attention to their industries' strengths. Vice Chairman, GJEPC, Shri Shaunak Parikh, spoke about positioning India's gems and jewellery in the UK's luxury retail landscape, while Additional Executive Director, EPCH, Shri Rajesh Rawat, highlighted how handicrafts and carpets can carve out niche spaces in premium UK markets. Executive Director, EEPC, Shri Adhip Mitra, underscored the potential of engineering goods and auto components, stressing innovation and compliance as keys to success. General Manager, AEPC, Dr. Saurabh Kumar, emphasised India's competitiveness in apparel and textiles, noting how CETA can boost exports if exporters align with sustainability and ethical sourcing standards.

The dialogue was further enriched by buyers' perspectives, with General Secretary, Buying Agents Association, Ms. Anchal Kansal, stressing the importance of supply chain transparency and timely delivery in sustaining trust with UK buyers. The UK India Business Council (UKIBC) and HSBC also shared their views on fostering industry collaborations and building resilient supply chains to deepen India-UK trade.

The programme concluded with an interactive Q&A session with exporters, followed by closing remarks from Additional DGFT, CLA New Delhi, Smt. Vrunda Manohar Desai, who expressed her gratitude to the speakers and participants while reiterating DGFT's commitment to supporting Indian exporters in leveraging CETA effectively.

The outreach programme, compared by Asst. DGFT, Shri Hemant Kumar, marked a crucial step towards strengthening India-UK trade ties and positioning Indian exporters to make the most of this landmark Agreement.

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