



# AECCI NEWSLETTER

**SOURCING ENTERPRISE**

**VOL - 35 (2025 - 26)**  
**DATE OF ISSUE - 01.04.2026**



**Jaheer J. Bukhari**  
**(Board Chairman - AECCI)**

**AECCI QUARTERLY BRIEF (JANUARY 2026 - MARCH 2026)**

## **Message from the 'Hon'ble Board Chairman'**

### **Dear Esteemed Members,**

As we release this edition of the AECCI Quarterly Brief for January–March 2026, we find ourselves exploring a global trade environment marked by both strength and recalibration. While international markets continue to demonstrate recovery, persistent geopolitical tensions, evolving supply chains and energy price sensitivities are reshaping trade dynamics across regions.

India's export performance remains encouraging, reflecting the adaptability of our industries. However, the concurrent rise in imports- particularly in energy, gold and industrial inputs- highlights the need for a balanced and strategic approach to trade. The widening trade deficit is a reminder that sustainable growth must be supported by diversification, value addition and policy alignment.

The ongoing discussions around the India–EU Free Trade Agreement represent a significant opportunity to deepen market access, enhance competitiveness and establish long-term partnerships.

At AECCI, we remain committed to supporting our members through advocacy, knowledge-sharing and global engagement. The strength of our chamber lies in the collective excellence of our members, whose achievements continue to elevate India's presence in global trade.

Let us move forward with confidence, collaboration and a shared vision for sustainable growth.

**Jaheer J. Bukhari**  
**(Board Chairman - AECCI)**



# Asian Exporters' Chamber of Commerce And Industry

**SOURCING ENTERPRISE**

**VOL - 35 (2025 - 26)  
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**AECCI QUARTERLY BRIEF (JANUARY 2026 - MARCH 2026)**



**Swarn Dhiman  
(Editor)**

## Message from the Editor

This quarter's edition comes at a time when global trade is telling a story of contrasts. On one hand, demand recovery and export momentum are creating optimism; on the other, rising import costs—especially in energy and essential commodities – are quietly reshaping trade balances across economies, including India.

Available data reflects that exports are growing steadily, but imports are accelerating faster, Hence, widening the trade deficit. This is the clear effects of supply chain adjustments and regional economic policies.

Against this backdrop, developments such as the India–EU FTA negotiations take on even greater importance. They are the policy by the government of India to redefine trade flows, open new sectors and create opportunities for Indian exporters to scale globally.

In this issue, we've also compiled key DGFT updates to help you stay informed, along with curated industry news. Also, we highlight our distinguished members for their active contribution to the chamber.

As always, this newsletter aims to not just inform, but to connect the dots - between policy and practice, data and direction, challenges and opportunities.

We hope you find this edition both insightful and valuable.



Sourcing Enterprise

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# Trade Agreements

## India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA)

**India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** - finalized in **Jan 2026**, one of the largest trade deals globally.

The FTA Covers **90%+ of goods for tariff reduction** and boosts services & investment flows, creating a market of about 2 billion people and eliminating EU tariffs on 90% of Indian goods, slashing duties to zero on nearly \$33 billion of exports.

As stated by MOC & I-in FAQs - The FTA is expected to have a significant positive impact on the Indian agricultural and processed food sector. Preferential Market Access for agricultural products like tea, coffee, spices, grapes, gherkins and cucumbers, dried onion, fresh vegetables and fruits as well as for processed food products will make them more competitive in the EU. This market access will strengthen farmers' realised incomes, reinforce rural livelihoods, and elevate the global competitiveness of Indian agricultural products.

Items excluded from FTA- meat and meat offal, dairy products, Honey, rice, sugar, tobacco etc.

Other FTAs/Ongoing negotiations and engagement with:

- o UK (CETA approval progress)
- o Canada, New Zealand
- o WTO partners at MC14 summit

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### India's Export Performance & Trade Balance

- **Exports growing moderately:**
  1. +11% YoY in Feb 2026 (goods + services)
  2. Quarterly growth is about 8.5% in FY26 (earlier quarter trend)
- **Total exports (Apr-Feb FY26):** ~\$790.9 billion (+5.8 %)
- **But imports rising faster:**
  1. +21.6% YoY in Feb 2026
  2. Driven by gold, energy, and industrial inputs
- **Trade deficit widening:**
  1. Around \$3.96 billion (Feb YoY widening)

Trend: Strong export momentum, but import surge is outpacing exports, putting pressure on the trade balance.

# DGFT Extends Export Obligation

## Deadline till 31 August 2026 for Advance Authorisation and EPCG Holders

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, has issued Public Notice No. 51/2025-26 dated 06 March 2026, granting a significant relief measure for exporters operating under Advance Authorisation and Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) schemes. In view of ongoing global challenges such as geopolitical tensions, shipping disruptions, and supply chain constraints, the DGFT has decided to extend the Export Obligation (EO) period for eligible authorisations.

As per the notification, all Advance Authorisations—including Standard, Annual Requirement, and Special Advance Authorisations—as well as EPCG Authorisations (both block-wise and overall EO periods), where the export obligation period was set to expire between 01 March 2026 and 31 May 2026, will now stand automatically extended up to 31

August 2026. This extension is being granted without the need for any application, amendment, or endorsement from the concerned Regional Authority, thereby reducing procedural burden on exporters.

Importantly, the extension is provided free of cost, and no composition fee will be charged. However, in cases where exporters may have already paid such fees for extension earlier, no refunds will be admissible. The relevant provisions have been incorporated in the Handbook of Procedures (HBP) 2023 through amendments to Para 4.40 (Advance Authorisation), Para 5.13(f) (EPCG block-wise EO), and Para 5.16(f) (EPCG overall EO). Additionally, customs authorities have been duly informed to facilitate exports in line with the revised timelines, and compliance will be assessed at the time of Export Obligation Discharge Certificate (EODC) issuance.

Overall, this measure provides an automatic and compliance-friendly extension of approximately three months to affected exporters, enabling them to better manage delays and fulfil their export commitments without incurring additional costs or procedural hurdles.



# DGFT Notification

## Deadline till 31 August 2026 for Advance Authorisation and EPCG Holders

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) has issued Trade Notice No. 33/2025-2026 to provide clarity on the applicability of Interest Equalisation (Interest Subvention) benefits on pre-shipment and post-shipment export credit. This clarification has been released in response to representations from trade and industry seeking certainty on the continuation and scope of interest support available to exporters, particularly in the current environment of tight liquidity and rising financing costs.

Through this Trade Notice, DGFT has reiterated that the Interest Equalisation Scheme, as notified by the Government of India and implemented through the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), continues to govern the provision of interest subvention on eligible export credit. The benefit is available to exporters on both pre-shipment (packing credit) and post-shipment credit, subject to the terms, conditions, and eligible sectors as notified under the scheme from time to time. Exporters are advised that the benefit is not automatic under DGFT authorisations but is routed through lending banks, which are responsible for extending the concessional interest rate to eligible exporters and subsequently claiming reimbursement from the government.

The Trade Notice further emphasizes that exporters must ensure compliance with all eligibility conditions, including classification under specified sectors (such as MSMEs or identified tariff lines), adherence to prescribed interest rates, and submission of accurate documentation to their banks. It also highlights that any changes, extensions, or discontinuation of the Interest Equalisation Scheme are notified separately by the Department of Commerce and RBI, and exporters should rely only on such official notifications for decision-making.

Overall, the clarification aims to remove ambiguity and reinforces that interest subvention support remains a separate, scheme-driven benefit administered through the banking system, rather than a direct incentive linked to DGFT authorisations. Exporters are encouraged to stay in close coordination with their banks to avail the benefit correctly and ensure compliance with the latest operational guidelines.



# DGFT Notification

## DGFT Issues Trade Notice 31/2025-26 on Credit Assistance Guidelines for E-Commerce Exporters under EPM – Niryat Protsahan

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) has issued Trade Notice No. 31/2025-2026 providing important guidance under the Export Promotion Mission (EPM) – Niryat Protsahan, with a specific focus on facilitating credit access for e-commerce exporters. Recognizing the rapid growth of cross-border e-commerce and the unique challenges faced by small and medium exporters in accessing timely and affordable finance, the DGFT has outlined operational guidelines to strengthen credit support mechanisms for this segment.

The Trade Notice elaborates on the framework for extending credit assistance to e-commerce exporters, particularly those operating through online platforms and digital marketplaces. It highlights that exporters engaged in e-commerce transactions can avail pre-shipment and post-shipment credit support through authorized banking channels, aligned with existing RBI guidelines. The initiative aims to improve liquidity for such exporters by enabling easier access to working capital, thereby supporting order fulfilment, inventory management, and international logistics.

Under the EPM – Niryat Protsahan initiative, emphasis has been placed on streamlining documentation and encouraging financial institutions to adopt simplified procedures tailored to e-commerce export models, which are often characterized by high transaction volumes and lower ticket sizes. The Trade Notice also encourages coordination between exporters, e-commerce platforms, and banks to ensure better credit assessment and faster disbursement of funds.

Additionally, the notice underlines the role of digital integration and data-backed lending, wherein transaction histories from e-commerce platforms may be leveraged by banks to assess creditworthiness. Exporters are advised to maintain proper digital records and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements to benefit from such facilitation measures. Overall, the guidelines are intended to create an enabling ecosystem that promotes inclusive export growth by empowering emerging e-commerce exporters with improved access to finance and institutional support.



# Industry News

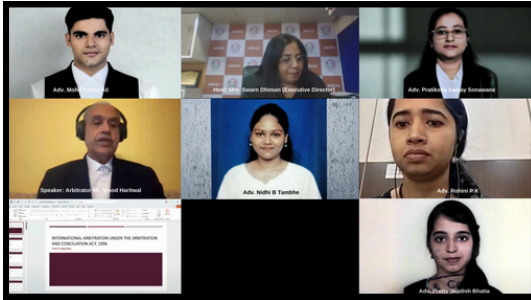


- **CBIC introduces deferred customs duty payment facility for manufacturers-importers** The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs is launching a new facility for manufacturer importers. Approved companies can now defer customs duty payments. This move aims to boost cash flow and support domestic manufacturing. The scheme will be operational from April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2028. Eligible firms will pay duties monthly instead of at clearance.
- **Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal to visit Canada in May for trade talks** Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal will visit Canada in May 2026. This visit coincides with ongoing talks for a free trade agreement between India and Canada. Discussions will focus on expediting these negotiations. Both nations will explore cooperation in clean energy, nuclear energy, agriculture, and critical minerals. The minister also met with UK and EU officials regarding trade pacts.
- **India sends 38,000 MT petroleum to Sri Lanka amid global energy crisis** India has sent 38,000 metric tons of fuel to Sri Lanka. This shipment arrived on March 28, 2026, after discussions between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Anura Kumara Disanayaka. The fuel includes diesel and petrol. This support comes as Sri Lanka faces supply disruptions due to the Middle East conflict.
- **Corporate Mitra Programme** The Government of India is planning to launch the Corporate Mitra programme by May–June 2026. The initiative was announced in the Union Budget 2026–27 to support MSMEs.  
Create a trained workforce (“Corporate Mitras”) to help MSMEs with Book keeping and Basic compliance and regulatory tasks.  
The scheme aims to train graduates to provide low-cost compliance support to small businesses, while also creating employment opportunities.



# Recent Events

## Activities from AECCI-‘International Arbitration Centre’ (AECCI-IAC)



**Hon'ble Arbitrator  
Adv. Vinod Haritwal**



**AECCI presents the first episode of the Friday Webinar Series featuring  
Mr. Vinod Haritwal as the Guest Speaker.**

**The session explores key aspects of international arbitration under the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 and its relevance in today's global dispute resolution landscape.**

**AECCI-IAC Representation: Mrs. Swarn Dhiman, Executive Director – AECCI**

**Platform: AECCI ePlatform (Online)**

**Date: 26 February 2026**

## AMA Session with Austria

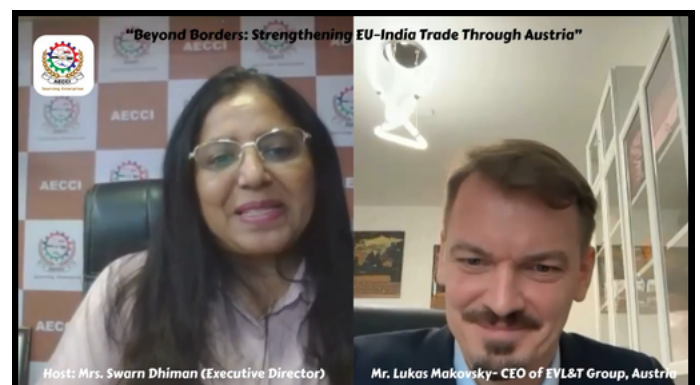
**Ask Me Anything (AMA) session hosted by AECCI India, where Trade Expert from Austria,  
discuss new opportunities for strengthening EU-India trade relations through Austria.**

**Host: Swarn Dhiman, ED-AECCI Expert**

**Guest: Mr. Lukas Makovsky, CEO – EVL&T Group**

**Date: 6 March 2026**

**Platform: AECCI E-Platform**



# Upcoming Events

AECCI



## INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRE (AECCI-IAC)

invites you to a 'Webinar' on  
'Arbitration as an Effective Mechanism in  
the Era of Global Business Disputes'



Speaker: Arbitrator  
**ADV. V. INBAVIJAYAN**

**10 APRIL 2026 (FRIDAY)**

Time: 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Mode: Online

Join us for an insightful session on the role of arbitration in international trade contracts, practical considerations, and emerging trends in cross-border dispute resolution.



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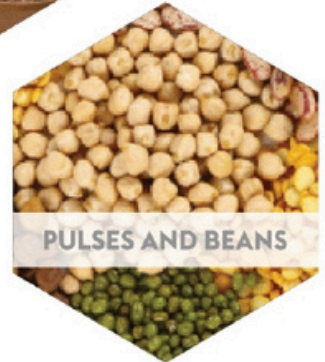
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- Grains
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- Cattle Feed

## WHY US?

- Quality
- Price
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- Shipment Mode
- Delivery Commitment
- Customer Service
- Flexibility
- International Norms & Standards



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E mail- [ed@aecci.org.in](mailto:ed@aecci.org.in)

**Connect at 8434720996**  
**for online attestation of Shipping documents.**

**(as per guidelines issued by DGFT vide Trade Notice number 24/20.12.2024)**

**&**

**B2B Meetings**

**One-to-One with global experts**

**&**

**Export Training Programme**

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