



Export Promotion Council
for EOUs & SEZs

22nd ANNUAL REPORT & AUDITED ACCOUNTS 2024-25

Zone-wise Merchandise Exports

(in Mn \$)

Rank	ZONE	Mar-24	Mar-25	Growth (%)	F.Y. 2023-24	F.Y. 2024-25	Growth (%)	% Share
1	Kandla SEZ	4029.9	3325.1	-17%	35433.4	35219.1	-1%	51%
2	Visakhapatnam SEZ	1472.1	1098.9	-25%	8563.1	13356.9	56%	19%
3	SEEPZ Mumbai	479.4	554.9	16%	6058.3	5559.2	-8%	8%
4	Falta SEZ	352.4	464.4	32%	3904.3	4552.2	17%	7%
5	MEPZ SEZ	371.7	335.0	-10%	3304.7	3850.3	17%	6%
6	Noida SEZ	282.7	460.2	63%	3462.7	3616.9	4%	5%
7	Cochin SEZ	320.6	310.7	-3%	2317.8	2849.8	23%	4%
	Grand Total	7308.7	6549.1	-10%	63044.4	69004.4	9%	100%

Zone-wise Services Exports

(in Mn \$)

Rank	ZONE	Mar-24	Mar-25	Growth (%)	F.Y. 2023-24	F.Y. 2024-25	Growth (%)	% Share
1	Cochin SEZ	2975.5	3080.8	4%	27139.7	30062.2	11%	28%
2	SEEPZ Mumbai	1945.1	2001.9	3%	17846.3	21084.9	18%	20%
3	MEPZ SEZ	1788.4	2032.3	14%	17201.6	20373.8	18%	19%
4	Visakhapatnam SEZ	1751.6	1964.9	12%	17288.2	19408.1	12%	18%
5	Noida SEZ	931.9	1026.2	10%	9890.6	11598.0	17%	11%
6	Falta SEZ	321.0	336.8	5%	3850.3	3541.7	-8%	3%
7	Kandla SEZ	106.3	172.9	63%	1114.5	1554.3	39%	1%
	Grand Total	9819.9	10615.8	8%	94331.2	107623.0	14%	100%

Top 10 Sector-wise Merchandise Exports for EOUs

(in Mn \$)

Rank	Sector/Product Group	Mar-24	Mar-25	Growth (%)	F.Y. 2023-24	F.Y. 2024-25	Growth (%)	% Share
1	MEPZ SEZ	382.6	438.5	15%	4225.8	4431.5	5%	11.9%
2	Kandla SEZ	373.6	436.1	17%	3921.3	4215.5	8%	11.3%
3	Vishakhapatnam SEZ	307.3	324.5	6%	3034.5	2924.2	-4%	7.8%
4	SEEPZ Mumbai	187.8	202.8	8%	2142.0	2222.8	4%	6.0%
5	Noida SEZ	106.5	104.7	-2%	1051.3	1183.3	13%	3.2%
6	Cochin SEZ	70.6	60.2	-15%	703.4	742.8	6%	2.0%
7	Falta SEZ	30.1	43.3	44%	308.2	389.7	26%	1.0%
8	Noida SEZ	44.3	43.1	-3%	414.5	385.6	-7%	1.0%
9	Cochin SEZ	34.3	49.0	43%	281.9	355.5	26%	1.0%
10	Falta SEZ	23.6	25.4	8%	226.6	276.4	22%	0.7%
	Rest of all	92.6	86.4	-7%	1316.4	1021.8	-22%	2.7%
	Grand Total	1653.2	1814.2	10%	17625.8	18149.0	3%	100.0%



**Export Promotion Council for
EOUs & SEZs**

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2024-25**

EPCES Central Governing Council- 2025

S.No	Name of Zone	EOU Category (General/Reserve)	SEZ Unit Category (General/Reserve)		SEZ Developer Category	Regional Chairman
1	Cochin SEZ	Shri Noby PS, Director, Kerafibertex International Private Limited	Shri Mohammed Rasal, Managing Director, Forefront Solutions and Consultancies (P) Ltd	Shri Vinod Kumar R, Director, Western India Cashew Co. Pvt. Ltd.	Shri Remeshan Paleri, Chairman & Managing Director, ULCCS IT Infrastructure (P) Ltd.	Shri. K.K. Pillai Nikasu Frozen Foods (P) Limited
2	Falta SEZ	-	-	-	-	-
3	Kandla SEZ	-	Shri Tushar Ruparelia Partner Trend Setters KFTZ	Smt. Hirva Punit Mamtora, MD & CEO, India Exim Finserve IFSC Pvt. Ltd	-	-
4	MEPZ SEZ Chennai	Shri Anand, Director SEA Hydrosystems India Pvt. Ltd	Shri Dhinesh Kumar Varadharajan Managing Director Manav Packaging Pvt. Ltd.	Shri Vijay Raj B, Partner, Jb Enterprises	Shri Sunil Rallan, Vice Chairman EPCES & Managing Director J. Matadee Free Trade Zone Pvt.Ltd.	Shri Sivashanmugam Kumaresan, Co-founder Rishaba Industries LLP
5	Noida SEZ	Shri Bhuvnesh Seth, Managing Director, Replika Press Pvt. Ltd	Shri Vilas Gupta Managing Director Taurus Englobe Limited	Shri Sanand Mohan Purhoit, AGM Accounts, Kusum Healthcare Pvt. Ltd	Shri Navin Kedia, Director, DLF Assets Ltd	Shri. Sunil Puri Director Yasen Lighting Private Limited
6	SEEPZ SEZ	-	Shri Vijay Gujarathi Director & Chief Operations Officer EOS Power India Pvt. Ltd.	-	Shri. P. C. Nambiar, Director SEZ, Biotech Services Pvt. Ltd	-
7	Visakhapatnam SEZ	-	Shri Milind Mungikar Director Zen Linen International Pvt. Ltd.	-	Shri Srikanth Badiga Chairman EPCES & Director, Phoenix Infocity Pvt. Ltd.	Shri Avinash Chukkapalli Director Phoenix Tech Zone Pvt. Ltd

Development Commissioners

Smt. P. Hemlatha

Development Commissioner, Cochin Special
Economic Zone (CSEZ)
Kakkanad, Cochin – 682 030
Tel: 0484-2558676 | Fax: 0484-2413074
Mob: 09418463015
E-mail: dc@csez.gov.in, mail@csez.gov.in

Shri Deen Bandhu Singh,

Development Commissioner, Falta Special
Economic Zone (FSEZ)
2nd MSO Building, 4th Floor, Nizam Palace,
Kolkata – 700 020
Tel: 033-22813117 | Fax: 033-22877923
E-mail: devcomm.fsez@nic.in

Shri Dinesh Singh,

Zonal Development Commissioner, Kandla
Special Economic Zone (KASEZ)
Gandhidham (Kutch), Gujarat – 370 230
Tel: +91-2836-252475
E-mail: zonaldckandla@gmail.com,
dc.kasez-gj@gov.in

Shri Alex Paul Menon,

Development Commissioner, MEPZ Special
Economic Zone (MEPZ SEZ)
Tambaram, Chennai
Tel: 044-22628220 | Fax: 044-22628218
Mob: 07338886632
E-mail: dc@mepz.gov.in

Shri A. Bipin Menon

Development Commissioner, Noida Special
Economic Zone (NSEZ)
Noida-Dadri Road, Noida Phase II, Noida (U.P.)
– 201 305
Tel: 0120-2567270-74, 3021444-46
Fax: 0120-2562314, 2567276
Mob: 9711320820
E-mail: dc@nsez.gov.in

Shri Dnyaneshwar Patil,

Development Commissioner, SEEPZ Special
Economic Zone (SEEPZ SEZ)
Service Centre Building, Andheri (East),
Mumbai – 400 096
Tel: 022-28290856 / 143
Mob: 9425171409
E-mail: dcseepz-mah@nic.in

Shri M. Srinivas,

Zonal Development Commissioner,
Visakhapatnam Special Economic Zone (VSEZ)
Administrative Building, VSEZ, Duvvada,
Visakhapatnam – 530 049
Tel: +91-891-2708255, 2768388
Fax: +91-891-2587352
E-mail: devcomm.vsez@gov.in

Co-Opted Members

Ms. Sindhu Pillai A

Director, Department of Financial Services
3rd Floor, Jeevan Deep Building, New Delhi
Tel: 011-23344462
E-mail: sindhu.p@nic.in

Shri Vikas Malhotra

General Manager, India Trade Promotion
Organisation (ITPO)
Pragati Bhavan, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi –
110001
Tel: 011-23371868
Mob: 9899678969
E-mail: vikas@itpo.gov.in

Shri Abhishek Singh

Joint Secretary (ED), Ministry of External Affairs
Jawahar Lal Nehru Bhawan, 23-D, Janpath, New
Delhi – 110001
Tel: 011-23088182
E-mail: jsed@mea.gov.in

Dr. Sonu Singh

Scientist-E (HSM), Ministry of Environment &
Forests
E-mail: sonu.singh@nic.in

Shri Umesh Chandra Shukla

Director, O/o DCMSME (Export Division),
Ministry of MSME
Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi
Tel: 011-23062249
E-mail: umeshshukla.msme@gmail.com

Shri Nirmal Kumar

Assistant Director, Directorate General of Export
Promotion (DGEP)
CBEC, Department of Revenue, Ministry of
Finance
8th Floor, Jeevan Bharti Building, Janpath, New
Delhi – 110001
E-mail: dgep-dor@nic.in

GST Council of India

Ministry of Finance
(Awaited details)

Shri Gaurav Anshuman

Regional Manager, Export Credit & Guarantee
Corporation Ltd. (ECGC)
Mohan Dev, 6th Floor, Tolstoy Marg, Connaught
Place, New Delhi – 110001
Tel: (011) 4152 9920, 4152 9912–16 / 19–21
Fax: (011) 4152 9918
E-mail: gaurav.anshuman@ecgc.in

Office of the Director General, GST

Ministry of Finance
(Awaited details)



From the desk
of the Chairman

Dear Members and Readers, Greetings.

I am pleased to present the Annual Report 2024-25 and express my gratitude for the opportunity to serve as Chairman of EPCES.

The past year continued to bring challenges as we moved out of the post-COVID phase. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, under the able leadership of our Hon'ble Minister, worked tirelessly to attract global investments and extend full support to the industry. Regular interactions with stakeholders of EOUs and SEZs provided timely guidance and encouragement.

A major highlight was the signing of the India-UK Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) on July 24, 2025. This agreement is expected to boost bilateral trade by \$34 billion annually, create thousands of jobs in both countries, and strengthen cooperation. It will allow labor-intensive Indian products such as leather, footwear, and clothing to enter the UK at concessional rates, while making UK products such as Scotch whisky and electric vehicles more affordable in India. The agreement also provides for easier movement of professionals, regulatory cooperation, and resolution of non-tariff issues.

At the same time, reciprocal tariffs imposed by the USA have created uncertainty for Indian exporters. Our Hon'ble Prime Minister is actively working to safeguard exporters' interests and ensure that trade continues smoothly. It is expected that both countries will soon arrive at a balanced tariff regime. On the multilateral front, India has been playing a key role in strengthening BRICS cooperation, thanks to the vision and leadership of our Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

Further, under the leadership of our Director General, EPCES has built a strong professional team and facilitated the resolution of important policy matters for SEZs and EOUs.

Key Achievements:

- RoDTEP benefits restored for SEZs/EOUs (effective 11.03.2024 for EOUs and 01.07.2024 for SEZs; restored w.e.f. 01.06.2025).
- Exemption from mandatory QCOs on imports for export purposes.
- Permission for IT/ITES SEZs to serve the DTA by demarcating non-processing areas.
- Exemption from safeguard restrictions on isopropyl alcohol.
- Continuation of zero-rating on lease rentals and employee welfare charges.
- Relaxation for captive IT hardware and movement of used IT assets to DTA.
- Quick resolution of SIMS portal deactivation issues.

Moving forward with the dynamic CGC team, with Mr. Sunil Rallan taking over as Vice Chairman, it is envisaged that all vacant RGC positions will be filled with co-opted members from different sectors of SEZs and EOUs. This year, EPCES will focus more on promoting our units in global markets. We are also planning to introduce regular training and awareness programs.

With best wishes,

(Srikanth Badiga)
Chairman, EPCES

Dear Members and Readers,

It gives me immense pleasure in presenting Annual Report of EPCES for the year 2024-25 having details of activities undertaken during the year, audit report and the audited accounts, as approved by the Central Governing Council.

As per UNCTAD, global trade (goods and services) in 2024 increased by 3.7% with Services rising 9% and goods rising by 2%. As regards India, during FY 2024-25, goods exports at US\$ 437 billion remained at the FY 2023-24 level, while services exports grew by 12% to US\$ 383.5 billion, thus overall exports increasing by 5.5% to US\$ 820.9 billion. As regards SEZs, during 2024-25, goods export increased by 9% to USD 69 Bn while services exports increased by 14% to USD 107 Bn and total exports of goods and services increased by 12% to USD 176 Bn.

However, the global estimates for 2025 are pessimistic following a surge in tariffs by the US and trade policy uncertainty since the start of the year. The WTO Global Trade Outlook and Statistics Report of 16 April 2025 has predicted a fall in the volume of world merchandise trade by 0.2% in 2025. The volume of world commercial services trade is projected to grow by just 4.0% in 2025.

EPCES has continued its capacity building and export promotion activities and has kept on pursuing issues concerning SEZs and EOUs with the Government. Commerce Secretary held Stakeholder Consultation for EOUs and SEZs on 30.8.2024 in Hyderabad where Commerce Secretary was apprised about the problems being faced by the EOUs and SEZs, particularly regarding rollout of ICEGATE in SEZs. He reviewed the ICEGATE rollout again on 10.12.2024. Thanks to the constant follow up by EPCES, SEZ Online has been continued for DTA transactions. Furthermore, Government has finally restored the RoDTEP scheme to EOUs and SEZs w.e.f 1.6.2025 and the Hybrid working under SEZ Rule 43A has been extended upto 31.12.2027.

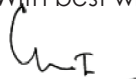
You will be happy to know that the Government is actively considering permitting DTA sale on "Duty Foregone Basis", reverse job work, and receipt for Services rendered by SEZ units to DTA in INR. EPCES also got a study on "Identifying Regulatory and Infrastructure Gaps in Government SEZs and Proposing an Action Plan" by PwC and the report was released by Commerce Secretary on 31.7.2024.

Further, with the Government's approval of the new Articles of Association, elections for the Central Governing Council (CGC), Regional Governing Councils (RGCs), Vice Chairperson, and Regional Vice Chairpersons have been held during July–August 2025. EPCES welcomes Shri Sunil Rallan, CMD, J Matadee Free Trade Zone Pvt Ltd. as the new Vice Chairperson of the Council. EPCES also welcomes the newly elected members of the Central and Regional Governing Councils and the Regional Vice Chairpersons.

I am sure the members and readers will enjoy reading about the activities of the Council during 2024-25 in this Annual Report.

With best wishes,

With best wishes,



(Alok V Chaturvedi)
Director General, EPCES



From the desk of
Director General

Statement of Activities

EPCES Participates in Finance Minister's Pre- Budget Consultation with “Trade and Services” Group



On 26 December 2024, Union Minister of State for Finance Shri Pankaj Chaudhary chaired a pre-budget consultation for the “Trade and Services” group in New Delhi. EPCES was represented by Chairman Shri Srikanth Badiga. Other attendees included key officials from the Finance Ministry, commerce sector, and leaders of export promotion councils such as NASSCOM, FIEO, MPEDA, AEPC, and CLE.

Shri Badiga presented the following demands for the SEZ and EOU sector:

- **Extend RoDTEP Scheme to SEZs/EOUs till 30 Sept 2025:** The current DGFT notification (No. 32/2024-25 dated 30.9.2024) extends RoDTEP only for DTA exporters (to Sept 2025) and until Dec 2024 for EOUs/SEZs. This disparity lacks justification. If budget constraints exist, differentiate by sector/product instead of by DTA vs SEZ/EOU status. SEZ/EOU exporters have suffered due to delays in ICEGATE/IGCR rollout; therefore, RoDTEP should match DTA exporter timelines (extended to 30 Sept 2025) for SEZ/EOUs as well.
- **Amend SEZ Act via Finance Bill:** SEZs serve as regulatory laboratories with world-class infrastructure. Proposed reforms include:
 - **Duty-foregone Domestic Supplies:** Allow SEZs to sell goods domestically on a duty-foregone basis (as in the US/China FTZ model), rather than full customs duty. This avoids forcing exporters to set up separate domestic plants and aligns with MOOWR/EOU practices. It

will promote Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat by allowing use of zero/low-duty inputs under trade agreements without extra duties.

- **Services Payment in INR:** Amend Section 29(z) of the SEZ Act to allow payment for SEZ-to-DTA services in Indian rupees. Currently only goods can be paid in INR. There is no reason to require foreign currency for SEZ services supplied to DTA.
- **Streamline Subcontracting:** Remove unnecessary restrictions on subcontracting between SEZs and the DTA in the SEZ Rules to facilitate seamless operations.
- **Abolish Export Duty on DTA→SEZ Supplies (SEZ Rules):** SEZ units receive export duty on raw materials from the DTA (e.g. 30% on chrome ore) despite using them for export production (where final exports face no duty). This disadvantages SEZs versus DTAs. High Court rulings (Essar Steel Ltd & Kamyab Overseas) confirm such supplies are not “exports” and shouldn’t attract customs duty. Accordingly, delete the fifth proviso of SEZ Rule 27(1) and remove duty on DTA→SEZ inputs.
- **Relax SEZ Reinvestment Reserve (SEZ Rule 10AA):** Currently, in the third block of 5 years, SEZ units in services must spend 50% of profits on machinery/plant to claim deductions. For service units (whose main capital is employees), this is impractical. Relax the condition to allow spending on new hires instead of physical assets.
- **Amend SEZ Rule 11B (Partial Denotification):** Rule 11B creates a non-processing area (NPA) in IT/ITES SEZs subject to returning duty benefits for the NPA. Only proportionate (not full) duty benefits should be returned. Smaller duty paybacks for partial NPA will help developers and encourage investment.

Each demand was accompanied by a justification, highlighting benefits to SEZ competitiveness and compliance with SEZ Act provisions. The focus was on aligning SEZ/EOU treatment with DTA exporters and improving ease of doing business for SEZ units.

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Inter-Ministerial Consultations for Mitigating Adverse Impact of Reciprocal Tariffs by US on SEZ Units and EOUs



An inter-ministerial consultation meeting was held on 23.4.2025 under the chairmanship of Shri L Satya Srinivas, Special Secretary, Department of Commerce to deliberate upon the measures to be taken up to mitigate adverse impact of reciprocal tariff by the US on SEZ units and EOUs. Senior officers from D/o Commerce, DG Systems & Data Management (ICEGATE), DGEP, Director (Customs), TRU division participated in the meeting. On behalf of EPCES, Shri Alok Chaturvedi DG EPCES, Shri Srikanth Badiga, Chairman, Shri Vilas Gupta, Member CGC, Shri Madhav Patel Managing Director, Gujarat Credo Alumina Chemicals Pvt Ltd, Shri Arjun Akruwala, Gujarat Credo Alumina Chemicals Pvt Ltd, Shri Pranav Kumar, Vice President, Reliance Industries Ltd, Shri S.P. Murali, Head of Marketing, ZF Wind Power Coimbatore Pvt Ltd and other officers were there.

DG, EPCES made a detailed presentation in the meeting. The following key issues were raised:

- (i) There is need for finding more avenues for the production of SEZ Units. In this regard, SEZ to DTA supplies should be allowed on duty foregone basis. US allows this in their Foreign Trade Zones (FTZs)
- (ii) Goods manufactured from domestic taxes paid / Customs Duty paid goods should be allowed to be supplied to DTA without payment of Customs duties. This is also allowed in US FTZs.

- (iii) Job work / reverse job work procedures should be streamlined.
- (iv) INR payment for Supply of Services to DTA
- (v) eCommerce/courier operations should be streamlined to/from SEZs (US de-minimis US\$ 800 exemption).
- (vi) No IGST (Zero Rating) on warehousing and manufacturing services rendered to overseas clients (huge growth generated by relocation of GVCs)
- (vii) ICEGATE in SEZ wef 1.7.2024 has created huge Unease of Doing Business. DoC has extended SEZ Online usage time and gain. ICEGATE should be discontinued for SEZs because of the following:
 - a. Even simple filing of SB/BEs is problematic. Units don't get clearance documents – Assessed copy, LEO copy, Gate Pass. Consignments are stuck for hours with SEZ Customs. Export time has become uncertain. It is difficult to do same day exports. It has resulted in increased time and cost burden on exporters
 - b. Working on two systems SEZ Online and ICEGATE is problematic.
 - c. Units are familiar with SEZ Online system. It is user friendly and there is a dedicated SEZ Online manpower in DC office to help Units.
 - d. ICEGATE has no dedicated manpower at DC offices. Helpdesk is largely unresponsive. Exporters problems are not resolved for days.
- (viii) Automation of IGCR on ICEGATE in EOUs wef 25.9.2024 has also created problems for EOUs. Software was not meant for EOUs, not tested properly on actual EOU data and was launched. It is difficult to file monthly returns online. EOUs are not getting re-credit since 25.9.2024 to their bond based on returns due to lack of clear instructions to Jurisdictional Customs Officers.

- Their bonds getting exhausted. There are problems in further imports. For new EOUs, Bank Guarantees are also getting debited with no system of re-credit.
- (ix) The issue of online endorsement by SEZ Customs for Supply of Services/goods to SEZ units by DTA for enabling GST refund is pending for a long time
 - (x) (x) SEZ Units/EOUs should be allowed to import/export or procure all types of goods except prohibited ones as per SEZ Rule 26 and 27 and FTP Para 6.01(a & d). Restrictions meant for DTA importers (QCO, MIP conditions, Import Monitoring Systems, other Ministry restrictions etc.) should not be applicable on imports and exports by SEZs and EOUs. DGFT old notification may be reiterated. Restrictions should apply only on SEZ/EOU to DTA supplies when they enter DTA market.
 - (xi) No export duty on DTA to SEZ supplies (30% on Chrome Ore) should be levied. In principle approval for de-notification of SEZ land/demarcation of NPA under SEZ Rule 11B should be allowed so that developers can mobilise funds for payment of duty.
 - (xii) Advance payment for import of Bullion/Articles of Jewellery for SEZ Units should be allowed.
 - (xiii) Freight payment in Foreign Currency should be allowed from local banks instead of by Shipping companies which levy higher charges.
 - (xiv) SEZ units are yet to receive RoDTEP benefits even though SBs were filed on ICEGATE with great difficulty. It was decided in 10.12.2024 review that it should be cleared by 31.12.2024.
 - (xv) RoDTEP has been stopped wef 5.2.2025 with unwritten extensions after 31.12.2024. Many units were not allowed by Customs to file SBs with "Yes" to RoDTEP.
 - (xvi) RoDTEP should be extended on DTA pattern till 30.9.2025. Budget constraints should be for all exporters.
 - (xvii) ROSCTL for garments and made-ups should be allowed for SEZs and EOUs as well.
 - (xviii) Interest Equalisation Scheme should be restored.
 - (xix) MAI scheme should be restored for accessing new markets, reimbursement of statutory compliance costs.
 - (xx) Transport Assistance Scheme to be reinstated
- The status of resolutions and feedback may be tracked using the status tracker under the DGFT Helpdesk Services. Email and SMS would also be sent as and when the status of these tickets are updated. Trade stakeholders are encouraged to make appropriate use of these support facilities.

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Commerce Secretary holds “Stakeholder Consultation for EOUs and SEZs” in Hyderabad

EPCES, in association with Phoenix Group, K Raheja Corp, and Divyasree, organized a “Stakeholder Consultation for EOUs and SEZs” on 30 August 2024 at the Hyatt Hyderabad (chaired by Commerce Secretary Shri Sunil Barthwal). Around 50 representatives from various SEZs and EOUs attended alongside senior officials such as Shri L. Satya Srinivas (Additional Secretary), Shri Vimal Anand (Joint Secretary), and Zonal DCs. EPCES

Chairman Shri Srikanth Badiga and DG Shri Alok Chaturvedi led discussions.

In his opening remarks, Shri Badiga welcomed the Commerce Secretary and highlighted SEZ performance: since Feb 2006, incremental investment in SEZs totaled ₹6.46 lakh crore with 29.35 lakh new jobs. Exports from SEZs in 2023-24 were ₹13.55 lakh crore (7% growth), and SEZs have returned over 10 times the duty benefits taken. He



noted challenges: the sunset clause, and reduced space utilization post-Covid, causing financial stress for developers. During the Presentation following key issues were discussed.

- **SEZ Policy Clarity:** Urgent clarity is needed on whether SEZ reforms will come via the DESH Bill or SEZ Act amendments (pending since Feb 2022).
- **Rule-based Reforms:** Urge SEZ Rules amendments for: duty-foregone domestic supplies (as in MOOWR/EOU), INR payment for SEZ→DTA services, and streamlined job-work/reverse job-work between SEZ and DTA (removing restrictive conditions).
- **Export Duty Removal:** Reiterate that imposing export duty on DTA→SEZ inputs (not provided by the SEZ Act) is unjustified and legally untenable (High Court struck it down).
- **Partial Denotification (Rule 11B):** Fast-track approvals for partial de-notification or NPA demarcation under Rule 11B for stressed IT/ITES SEZs. Provide "in-principle" approval and phased NOC so developers can mobilize funds. Also amend Rule 11B to return only proportionate duty benefit for the NPA (not full).
- **Depreciation Clarity:** Issue clarification on allowing depreciation when calculating duties to be paid for demarcation under Rule 11B, since the lack of clarity is causing disputes.
- **Reduce Compliance Burden:** Simplify procedures for DTA→SEZ supplies. Specifically, endorsed invoices now require 100% endorsement and manual GST officer input for refunds, causing pendencies. Automate endorsement transmission to GSTN for refunds.
- **ICEGATE Transition Issues:** Highlight severe problems since migrating to ICEGATE (from SEZ Online) on 1.7.2024. Simple export filings (Shipping Bills/BEs) are failing: SEZ units do not receive required clearance docs (Assessed copy, LEO, Gate Pass), causing delays and detention costs. Operating both SEZ Online and ICEGATE systems has been difficult. SEZ Customs offices lack dedicated ICEGATE support. DGICEGATE helpdesks are unresponsive, leaving exporters' problems



unresolved for days.

- **IT/ITES SEZ ICEGATE Mandate:** Question the requirement for IT/ITES SEZs (with virtually no goods trade) to implement ICEGATE infrastructure.
- **Exemptions from DTA Import Restrictions:** When DGFT imposes import policy restrictions (QCO, MIP, etc.), explicitly exempt SEZ/EOU based on SEZ Rules / EOU scheme provisions, to avoid procurement hassles.

During Q&A, members raised additional points:

- **Partial De-notification Approvals:** Mr. Amogh Patankar (K Raheja Corp.) requested speeding up file approvals for partial de-notification. The Commerce Secretary noted that Board of Approval (BOA) meetings were now monthly to avoid delays, assuring no proposal should linger beyond one month.
- **HSN Code Alignment:** Mr. J. Sathyanarayana (Granules India) asked to align India's 6-digit HSN code for Paracetamol (2922 29) with global standards (such as 2924 29), since misalignment blocked In-Korea trade benefits. The Additional Secretary (Exports) acknowledged the tariff division's agreement and promised to issue the change.
- **TED Refund (VSEZ):** Mr. K. Raghava Reddy (Midwest Granite) raised that the TED refund was not being given in VSEZ for granite, although mining (under which granite falls) is considered manufacturing under SEZ Act. The Deputy Commissioner (VSEZ) said customs held that granite is "mining" not "manufacturing," so no refund. Commerce Secretary advised the issue should have been followed up earlier and urged quick resolution.
- **TED Refund Authority/Health Cess:** Mr. Ravi Kumar (Mylan Laboratories) noted confusion about the sanctioning authority for TED refunds and delays. AS(SEZ) said court cases caused confusion but instructions will be issued shortly. Mr. Kumar also requested exemption of the health cess for SEZ exports; officials agreed to take it up with authorities.
- **Post-Demarcation Approvals:** Ms. Preeti Yadav (Sundew Properties) asked if any approvals are needed after BOA approves demarcation (subject to duty payment). AS(SEZ) explained two approval types: if duty is payable, the unit must pay at DC (Development Commissioner) to finalize; if DC's order says duty paid, the

decision stands final. She clarified in some zones, DC offices were advising a follow-up, causing confusion. Commerce Secretary directed issuance of formal guidelines to clear this ambiguity.

- **State NOC for De-Notification:** Mr. Patankar also reported that some developers face delays getting State Government NOCs for partial de-notification. AS(SEZ) noted States gave NOCs for SEZ usage; for non-SEZ use, another NOC may be needed. He agreed to raise it in BOA and to escalate any stuck proposals to expedite State approval.
- **Invoice Endorsement for GST Refund:** Mr. Pradeep Gupta (DBS Tech) asked for resolution of huge pendencies in endorsing DTA invoices for zero-rated SEZ supplies. AS(SEZ) said (i) GST Policy Wing will consider allowing endorsement of risk-based invoice samples only, and (ii) GSTN agreed to create a dashboard for officers to view relevant SEZ-endorsed invoices. Commerce Secretary scheduled a meeting with all stakeholders, emphasizing that a digital transfer of endorsed invoices should suffice for refund processing.
- **Depreciation for Demarcation Duty:** Mr. G. Narayan Rao (NSL SEZ) questioned inconsistent treatment of depreciation when calculating duties on demarcation (Rule 11B). Ms. Yadav cited an earlier instruction (Issue 7 of SEZ Rules) clarifying that Rule 49 applies for plant & machinery clearance (11B(5)(i)), not 11B(5)(ii). AS(SEZ) explained the rationale for 11B's introduction and noted newer demands (pro-rata duty, depreciation) are emerging. Commerce Secretary agreed the demands have merit and said he would discuss them with DoR. He reiterated that SEZs are foreign territory, and any export duty on DTA→SEZ should be reviewed. He announced that a detailed review of the SEZ concept versus DTA is underway, including duty-foregone domestic supplies and INR payments for services, to encourage more SEZ investment.

Commerce Secretary Shri Barthwal concluded that these interactive sessions would continue, as they provide valuable industry feedback. He highlighted the need for reforms via both legislative amendments (SEZ Act) and rule changes, and invited EPCES to submit recommendations to streamline SEZ operations.

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Regular Reviews by Hon'ble Commerce & Industry Minister with Export Promotion Councils and Industry Associations

9 April 2025

On 9 April 2025 the Minister met EPCs and industry bodies to discuss the global trade changes after the US announced reciprocal tariffs. The Government explained ongoing talks with the US for a multi-sectoral Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA), and asked exporters not to panic as the team is working carefully to secure a balanced outcome. The Minister highlighted India's strong export performance in 2024-25 (above USD 820 billion) and said India's manufacturing and job creation potential could grow if global companies shift supply chains here.

Sector concerns were presented and the Government noted them: seafood (shrimp) exporters asked for short-term working capital support; apparel exporters requested temporary increases in RoSCTL to ease margin pressure; pharma and chemicals sought faster regulatory clearances; electronics exporters requested short-term incentives and higher RoDTEP rates; engineering exporters asked for timely NOCs for specialty steel and expanded ECGC cover for African markets. Exporters across sectors stressed



the need for a dedicated market diversification package to reduce reliance on the US. EPCES urged consideration of SEZ/DTA duty treatment on the model of some foreign FTAs and highlighted operational problems with ICEGATE in SEZs.

The meeting also recorded that later on 9 April 2025 the US Executive Order temporarily suspended some additional duties until 9 July 2025 (except for China), while a baseline 10% duty remained in force.

13 March 2025



The 13 March 2025 review focused on immediate trade challenges and ways to boost exports. EPCs raised sector-specific problems: the competitiveness of US polymer suppliers, the impact of US steel tariffs on iron and steel exports (affecting MSMEs and shipments at sea), opportunities in aluminium if

tariff lines permit, and a serious shortage of skilled labour in apparel during peak festival months. Concerns were also raised about possible tariffs on handloom and carpets and high compliance costs for pharmaceuticals exporting to the US.

Chairman Shri Srikanth Badiga urged changes to SEZ policy to improve utilisation — including duty treatment for SEZ-to-DTA supplies and relaxation where SEZ units use domestic inputs — and called for lower compliance costs inside SEZs as ICEGATE rollout had created operational difficulties. The Minister underlined the Government's efforts to pursue FTAs with developed countries, urged exporters in gems, jewellery and electronics to target an additional USD 5 billion in exports before year-end, and noted that services exports were growing while merchandise needed a boost.

30 January 2025

At the 30 January 2025 meeting key officials from the Department of Commerce, DPIIT, DGFT and other ministries shared new initiatives and the Minister set out policy directions. The Commerce Secretary described two important initiatives: an AI-driven data analytics platform to provide deeper trade insights, and a new portal to address Technical Barriers to Trade (TBTs) and Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) to help exporters manage regulatory hurdles.

The Minister stressed that Market Access Initiative (MAI) funds will remain limited and encouraged

EPCs to diversify their funding and activities. The Department will explore integrating essential approvals with the RCMC to simplify processes and strengthen EPC membership. On Quality Control Orders (QCOs), the Minister clarified these are intended to protect the domestic market from substandard products, not to act as NTBs; ministries will prioritise addressing QCOs that disrupt supply chains. The Government also invited suggestions to improve the Advance Authorization scheme to make it more responsive to industry needs.

27 June 2024

On 27 June 2024 the Minister met EPCs and industry at Bharat Mandapam. Officials reviewed ways to strengthen market outreach and support exporters. India's trade for April-May 2024 was discussed, and exporters highlighted several SEZ/EOU-specific issues: the need for early passage of the DESH/SEZ amendment, paperless endorsement of DTA invoices to help DTA suppliers claim GST refunds, a review of Free Trade Warehousing Zone rules to attract regional business, and protecting EOUs/SEZ units from sudden changes in DGFT import policy.

EPCES drew attention to BIS/QCO applicability on inputs supplied by SEZs/EOUs to DTA exporters, the imposition of export duty on DTA supplies to SEZs, and requested a limited amendment to Rule 11B for IT/ITES SEZs to ensure proportional duty treatment. A recommendation was also made to align India's HSN code for paracetamol with that adopted by several trading partners to secure preferential duty benefits under CEPA arrangements.

Committee for Revised RoSCTL Rates for Exports of Garments and Made-Ups constituted- SEZs and EOUs included

The Government of India (Order F.No. 602/5/2024 dated 21.02.2025) formed a committee to review and update RoSCTL (Rebate of State & Central Taxes & Levies) ceiling rates for garments and made-ups exports. Thanks to EPCES's representations, this committee's mandate explicitly included SEZ and EOU exports (previously they had been excluded). In line with this, a meeting on 6 March 2025 with EPCs, exporters, and the Textiles Ministry approved

a revised data submission format for RoSCTL rate calculation. Exporters and councils were advised to submit audited FY 2023-24 data in the updated Annexure-B. The submission deadline (originally 31 March 2025) was extended to 15 April 2025 (by F. No. 140602/5/2024-DBK/320-345 dated 26.3.2025) to accommodate the additional data requirements. EPCES had informed to members of these deadlines.

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RoDTEP scheme Restored for SEZs and EOUs

(To be published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part II Section 3, Sub Section (II))

Government of India
Ministry of Commerce & Industry
Department of Commerce
Directorate General of Foreign Trade
Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi

Notification No: 11/2025-26
New Delhi, 26 May, 2025


Subject: Restoration of RoDTEP for Advance Authorisations (AAs) holders, Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and Export-Oriented Units (EOUs) from 01.06.2025

S.O.(E): In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 5 of the Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992, read with Para 1.02 of the Foreign Trade Policy 2023, the Central Government hereby notifies the restoration of RoDTEP for Advance Authorizations (AAs) holders, Special Economic Zones (SEZs), and Export-Oriented Units (EOUs) from 01.06.2025.

2. The rates are available in Appendix 4RE including newly aligned HS codes as per the Finance Act, 2025. The details are available on the DGFT portal at www.dgft.gov.in, under the link 'Regulations > RODTEP'.

Effect of this Notification: The Support under the RoDTEP Scheme for exports of products manufactured from AAs, SEZs, and EOUs is restored with effect from 01.06.2025.

This issues with the approval of the Minister of Commerce & Industry.


(Ajay Bhadoo)
Director General of Foreign Trade
Additional Secretary to the Government of India
E-mail: dgft@nic.in

[Issued from File No.: 01/94/180/019/AM26/PC-4]

EPCES launches an AI (Artificial Intelligence) powered Chat Bot

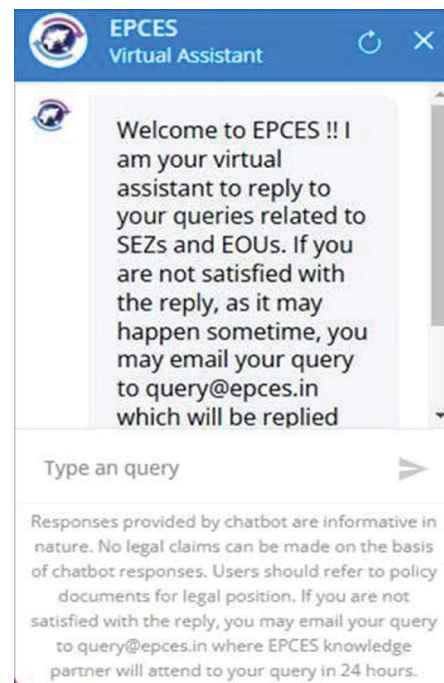
EPCES has long addressed member queries sent to query@epces.in through its knowledge partner, sharing quarterly replies with members. To improve responsiveness, EPCES piloted an AI-powered chatbot ("EPCES Virtual Assistant") trained on past member queries (and the SEZ Act, Rules, and Instructions). This allows members to get instant answers to previously addressed questions.

Users should note: AI responses may occasionally be incorrect or irrelevant. For routine queries, the chatbot provides quick replies. Complex or new questions should still be emailed to query@epces.in (responded by experts in 1–2 days).

The chatbot can be accessed via:

- EPCES website: epces.in (the virtual assistant appears immediately on the homepage)
- Direct link: https://app.zooq.ai/live_bot_epces

Members are requested to use the chatbot and send feedback to dg@epces.in to help improve its performance.



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CIM and Commerce Secretary releases EPCES-PwC Study on “Identifying Regulatory and Infrastructure Gaps in Government SEZs and Proposing an Action Plan



EPCES engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to study government-owned SEZs (NSEZ, MPEZ, VSEZ, SEEPZ, KSEZ, CSEZ) and identify operational/infrastructure gaps. The report, based on unit feedback and consultations with Development Commissioners, covered:

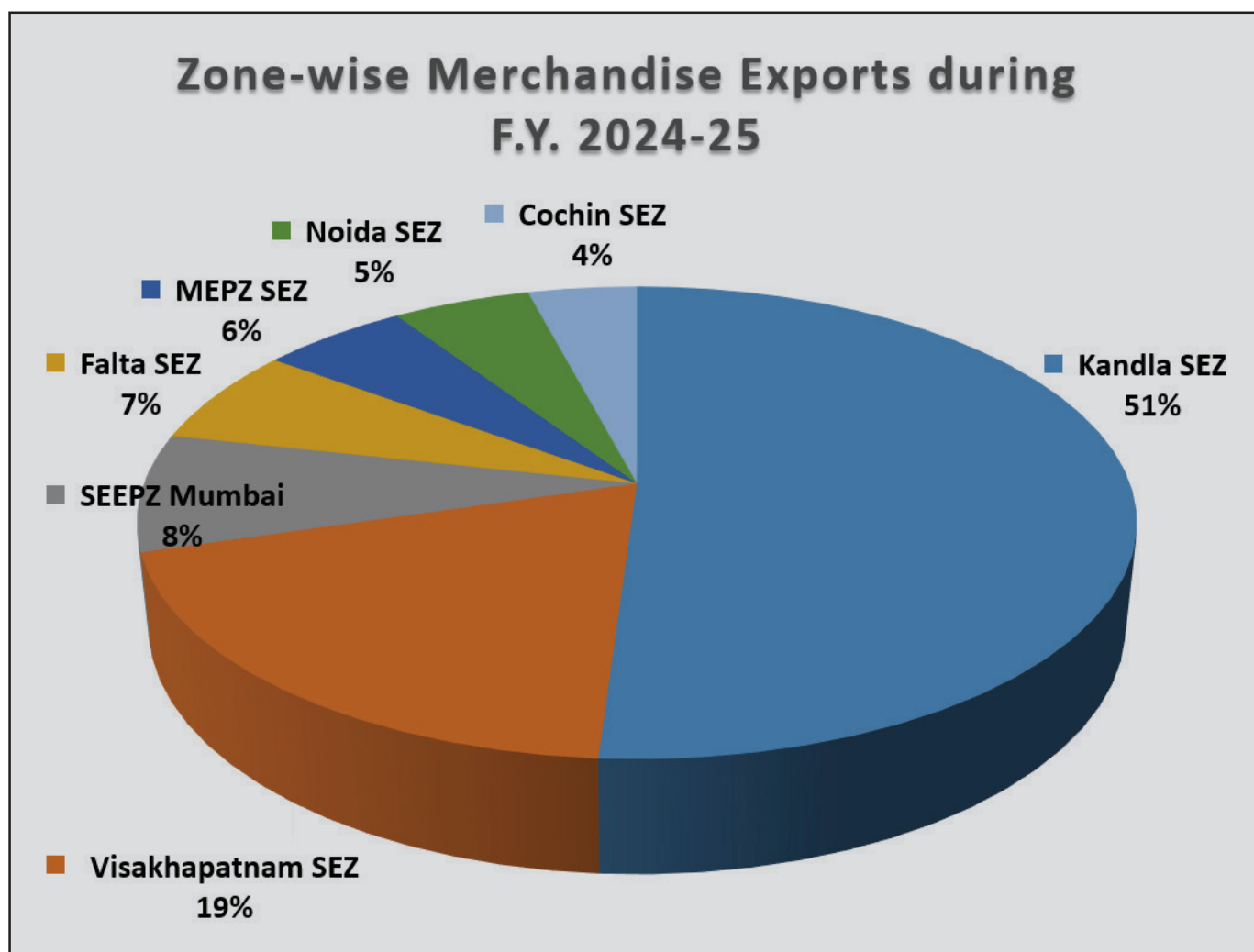
- Operational and Utility Challenges: Day-to-day activity constraints and infrastructure deficits faced by SEZ units.



- Accessibility & Connectivity Issues: Internal/external transport and connectivity limitations for SEZ units.
- Regulatory Challenges: Legal and procedural hurdles impacting unit operations.

For each SEZ, a “to-do” list was developed to address and fast-track resolution of these identified issues. The final study report was officially released by the Commerce Secretary on 31 July 2024 (before a BOA meeting) and is available on the EPCES website. It serves as a roadmap for improving the efficiency and competitiveness of government SEZs.

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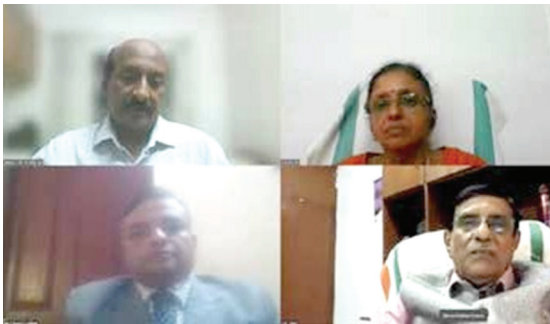


Activities from EPCES Regional Offices

April – June 2024

Cochin SEZ

Symposium on Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Programme



An interactive virtual Symposium on the AEO Programme was held for EPCES members in the Cochin SEZ region. Experts presented key aspects of the AEO certification and its benefits for exporters. Participants discussed compliance requirements and the process for obtaining AEO status. The session concluded with a Q&A, reinforcing EPCES's role in facilitating SEZ exporters' engagement with the AEO scheme.

Webinar on GST & IT: Updates and Insights



On June 28, 2024, EPCES CSEZ, in association with WTC Bangalore and BDO India, conducted a webinar on "GST, Incentives & Information Technology." Speakers highlighted recent GST Council recommendations and exemptions for SEZs/EOUs, and covered IT sector incentives. The session included a presentation of floor-wise demarcation (Rule 11B) for IT/ITES SEZs. Over 300 members attended online, gaining clarity on tax

updates and compliance procedures under GST and SEZ laws

Webinar on RoDTEP Scheme and SEZ Rule 11B (CSEZ Bangalore Region)

On April 25, 2024, EPCES CSEZ Bangalore (in association with WTC Bangalore and BDO India, Hyderabad & Pune) organized a webinar titled "RODTEP Scheme for SEZs/EOUs & Rule 11B." The webinar explained DGFT's extension of the RoDTEP scheme to SEZ/EOU exports and the new Rule 11B floor-wise demarcation. It was chaired by the JDC (CSEZ Bangalore) and EPCES Regional Chairman K.K. Pillai. Over 240 exporters participated. Speakers from BDO India detailed the RoDTEP and Rule 11B provisions. Sri Vivek George (WTC Bangalore) and the Regional Chairman opened and closed the session, emphasizing EPCES's role in securing these benefits.



Visit to Indeevaram, Infopark (Koratty), Thrissur (CSEZ)



On April 3, 2024, the Cochin Regional Director of EPCES visited Indeevaram (Infopark, Koratty) and held an interactive meeting with SEZ and EOU unit exporters. She explained membership benefits and mandate, EPCES's advocacy with ministries, and distributed the monthly trade bulletin and newsletter. The session addressed exporters' queries, and participants were assured that a training program on SOFTEX filing and other SEZ compliances would be organized for new units.

Madras Export Processing Zone (MEPZ) SEZ

Webinar on “SEZ – Challenges being faced by exporters” (May 22, 2024)



EPCES, WTC Chennai, and BDO India LLP held an online webinar on May 22, 2024, for MEPZ-SEZ members titled “SEZ – Challenges being faced by exporters.” Moderated by Mr. Vivek (WTC), the session focused on issues like endorsement of past invoices and the authorized services list. Speakers (including Mr. Prabhu Kumar, Dy. DC of MEPZ, and BDO's tax expert) discussed SEZ evolution, Tamil Nadu export performance, and Make in India initiatives. They also highlighted the need to reduce regulatory burden and operationalize non-functional SEZs. Over 300 participants joined, and the webinar concluded with a vote of thanks by EPCES RD S. Kalyani.

Noida SEZ (NSEZ)

Training on “ICEGATE Rollout in SEZs” (April 19 & June 14, 2024)



The DC Office Noida organized a hybrid training on the ICEGATE portal for SEZ units on April 19 and a follow-up webinar on June 14, 2024. DG Systems representatives conducted sessions on registering SEZ units on ICEGATE for filing export/import documents. Over 40 NSEZ exporters attended the in-person training, which was praised by participants. Training material included guidance on ICEGATE registration, bill filings, and transition from the SEZ Online portal to ICEGATE.

“Chintan Shivir”– Export Statistics Seminar (April 26, 2024)

EPCES NSEZ participated in a “Chintan Shivir” on April 26, 2024, organized by DG CI&S (Dept. of Commerce) at Science City, Kolkata. Shri R.K. Sharma (RD NSEZ) and Shri Tanu Aggarwal (DDG EPCES) attended the seminar. EPCES officials also met DC Faltia SEZ and Jt. DGFT Kolkata to discuss exporters' issues. The Shivir included presentations on trade statistics and export promotion strategies.



Provident Fund Grievance Redressal Workshop (April 29, 2024)



On April 29, 2024, the Noida PF Office held a grievance camp at Neo Kraft Ltd, NSEZ. JDC NSEZ Shri Surinder Malik inaugurated the event. 102 EPCES members participated, raising PF-related queries. Dr. Yogender Yadav (Regional PF Commissioner, Noida) addressed members' concerns. EPCES coordinated the workshop, facilitating dialogue between exporters and PF authorities.

July – September 2024

Cochin SEZ

Farewell to Mr. Natarajan, ADC (July 2024)



EPCES Cochin (with CEPZIA) organized a farewell on July 19, 2024, at RECCAA Club for Shri Natarajan, ADC (CSEZ) who was retiring. The Regional Chairman and unit representatives honored Mr. Natarajan with a memento. In his speech, Mr. Natarajan thanked EPCES for its cooperation and support during his tenure. The gathering appreciated his dedicated service to the SEZ community.

Meeting with Thai Consulate Officials (Aug 19, 2024)

On August 19, 2024, Thai Consulate officials Ms. Sunchawee Pattanachak and Ms. Anjali Dwivedi visited Kerala to explore trade opportunities. WTC Cochin, EPCES, and NASSCOM organized a meeting with them. Attendees included Mr. Vivek Mathai George (WTC), Mr. Sujith Unni (NASSCOM), and Mr. Pradeep Rajan (Brigade Group). Discussions covered Thailand's plans for an F&B festival in India (likely Bangalore), and EPCES's role in boosting SEZ/EOU exports. The



Thai delegates expressed interest in collaboration beyond food & beverage, exploring sectors like IT. EPCES assured full support for future joint initiatives and unit meetings with Thai businesses.

Bangalore SEZ

EPCES & Commerce Ministry Stakeholders Meeting in Bangalore (Oct 4, 2024)



EPCES co-hosted a physical stakeholders meeting on October 4, 2024, at Hotel Lalit Ashok, Bangalore, titled "India's IT Landscape – Growth, Challenges, and Policy Implications." The event was presided over by Shri Sunil Barthwal (IAS, Secretary of

Commerce). Key participants included EPCES members (especially from IT/ITES & EOU sectors) and officers from CSEZ (Cochin) and Commerce Ministry. Stakeholders highlighted issues such as labor law constraints on SEZs, infrastructure gaps at KIADB Aerospace SEZ (Bangalore), and excessive paperwork for SEZ compliance. The Commerce Secretary directed the CSEZ DC and Additional Secretary to consolidate concerns and recommendations. He also promised swift resolution of technical issues like SEZs' migration to ICEGATE and EOU onboarding under the IGCR system. The meeting underscored EPCES's ongoing support in organizing such high-level consultations.

Key Takeaways: Union Budget 2024–25 Seminar (July 26, 2024)

EPCES, along with WTC Bengaluru, AWAKE, IIMM, and Khaitan & Co., organized an SME seminar on "Union Budget 2024–25: What Businesses Need to Know" on July 26, 2024, in Bangalore. Speakers included tax experts Mr. Brijesh Kothary and Ms. Anshul Khemuka (Khaitan & Co.) and Dr. Srinivas M. Jamkhandi (IISc). Major announcements were covered: the standard income tax deduction for salaried employees was increased from ₹50,000 to ₹75,000; NPS deduction limit rose from 10% to 14%; corporate tax for foreign companies was cut from 40% to 35%; and long-term capital gains tax for shares was set at 12.5%. EPCES RGC member Mr. Vivek George moderated. Over 80 attendees (EPCES members from SEZs & EOUs) gained insights to better plan their finances and exports for the coming year.



CSEZ (Cochin SEZ region)

Webinar on “SOFTEX FILING – Compliance & Expert Insights” (Sept 14, 2024)



Participants reported gaining clarity on outsourcing SOFTEX certification. EPCES officers thanked all speakers and attendees, noting the event's success in simplifying this compliance for software exporters.

On September 14, 2024, EPCES (CSEZ-Coach Bangalore region) partnered with World Trade Centres (Bangalore, Cochin, Chennai) and BDO India to host a webinar on SOFTEX filing requirements. The session opened with S.K. Poovaiah (RD, EPCES-CSEZ, Cochin) inaugurating and Sri Vivek George (WTC Bangalore) moderating. Tax expert Mr. Karthik Mani (BDO India) provided detailed guidance on SOFTEX forms (mandatory for software exports), compliance steps, deadlines, and penalties under FEMA 2015. Over 360 participants interacted in a lively Q&A.

MEPZ SEZ

Conference on Robust Export Landscape & Trade Finance (July 19, 2024)

EPCES and ASSOCHAM (Southern Region) co-hosted a conference on “Robust Export Landscape and Trade Finance Opportunities for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth” on July 19, 2024, at Thiruvalluvar Auditorium (Tamil Nadu Open University, Chennai). The Hon'ble Finance Minister of Tamil Nadu, Thiru Thangam Thennarasu, inaugurated the event, stressing trade finance's role in boosting exports. The conference aimed to

educate exporters on trade finance instruments (EXIM Bank, SBI, Karur Vysya Bank participated) and facilitate networking among MSMEs, exporters, manufacturers, and officials. Panel discussions featured industry and banking experts addressing innovative trade finance solutions. The event empowered Tamil Nadu's export community with knowledge of funding options and built relationships among exporters and financial institutions.

Noida SEZ

Outreach Program: Customs & SEZ Rules (July 31, 2024, Jaipur)



On July 31, 2024, EPCES HQ and EPCES Noida jointly conducted an outreach program at Hotel InterContinental, Jaipur, on "Recent Developments in Customs & SEZ Rules." About 109 participants from Sitapura SEZ (Jaipur) and Mahindra World City attended. The Chief Guest was the DC of Customs, Jaipur. RD NSEZ (Mr. Sharma) and DDG EPCES also participated. Speakers from RIICO, Sitapura Gem & Jewellery Association, India Post, and Mahindra SEZ addressed attendees. The Regional Chairman (NSEZ) chaired the session. The workshop, covering SEZ compliance updates, was well-received by units and trade bodies, enhancing awareness of SEZ benefits and regulatory changes.

ICEGATE Training and Outreach (August 2024)

EPCES NSEZ conducted multiple ICEGATE training sessions in Sitapura SEZ, Jaipur, during August 2024:

- **Aug 7:** A training by DC NSEZ office (with GJEPCE support) covered ICEGATE filing of shipping bills and bills of entry. Over 50 participants from Sitapura units attended, including SEZ entrepreneurs and EPCES members. Customs officers Mr. Shiv Ratan and Mr. Bhuvanesh (NSEZ Customs) demonstrated ICEGATE registration and document filing.

- **Aug 9:** EPCES NHQ and Noida region arranged a training on NSDL IMEXIO and Hans Informatics software for filing export, import, and DTA documents on ICEGATE. 65 participants from Sitapura and Jaipur SEZs attended. NSDL's Ms. Tresa and Mr. Harish (Hans Informatics) presented the software features. Shri Jaideep (Secretary, Sitapura G&J Assoc.) chaired the event, commending EPCES's efforts. The program was highly appreciated by all attendees.



Visit of Hon'ble MOS Jitin Prasada to NSEZ (Aug 17, 2024)



On August 17, 2024, Shri Jitin Prasada (Hon'ble MOS, Commerce & Industry) visited the Noida SEZ DC Office. He was welcomed by DC NSEZ Shri Bipin Menon, JDC NSEZ Shri Surender Malik, and EPCES delegation: Shri Sunil Puri (Regional Chairman NSEZ), Shri Vilas Gupta (CGC Member EPCES), and Shri Jasbeer Singh (RGC Member EPCES). Around 25 SEZ units attended the meeting. The MOS engaged with industry representatives, heard their issues, and EPCES presented a bouquet and memento. Shri S.K. Gupta (MD, Artha Infrastructure) and other

developers also joined. The meeting allowed exporters to raise concerns directly with the Ministry, with EPCES facilitating the dialogue.

Outreach Program at Indore SEZ (Sept 5, 2024)

On Sept 5, 2024, EPCES HQ and EPCES Noida (with DC, Indore SEZ) organized a training session in Indore SEZ DC office on ICEGATE filing for SEZ exporters. Hans Informatics experts demonstrated shipping bill and bill of entry filings via ICEGATE. The goal was

to help SEZ units transition smoothly to ICEGATE for trade documentation. Over 30 unit officials attended and received hands-on guidance on the new portal. The program highlighted EPCES's commitment to capacity building across SEZs.

Webinar on IGCR for EOUs (Sept 9, 2024)

On September 9, 2024, EPCES Noida arranged participation in a DG Systems webinar on the Import General Manifest (IGCR) system for EOUs (3:00–4:00 PM). EPCES coordinated unit attendance and executives joined virtually, clarifying queries on

IGCR implementation. The webinar covered filing IGCR manifests and migration of EOUs into the new customs system. EPCES units participated actively, ensuring Indian exporters understood the latest EOU compliance requirements.

October – December 2024

Noida SEZ

Awareness Programme on ‘Cyber Hygiene & Security’ (Oct 4, 2024)



Following CVC directives, the DC Office CSEZ organized a cyber-security awareness program on October 4, 2024. Kerala Police Cyber Cell officials presented on topics like cyber fraud, hacking, and data protection. The session was chaired by Shri P.G. Laloo, DCC (Customs). ADCs, customs officers, and SEZ unit representatives attended. EPCES co-associated with the event. Participants gained crucial insights on maintaining cyber hygiene in export businesses and protecting sensitive information from threats.

Vigilance Awareness Campaign (Nov 13, 2024)

As part of the national Vigilance Awareness Week 2024, the DC Office held a vigilance seminar on November 13, 2024, at Athulya Auditorium, Infopark Campus. The theme was "Culture of Integrity for Nation's Prosperity." Keynote Speaker Dr. K.N. Raghavan (former Chief Commissioner, Customs & GST) addressed attendees, while Smt. Hemalatha IAS, DC (CSEZ), presided. They stressed the importance of integrity and ethical conduct. EPCES CSEZ Regional Chairman K.K. Pillai, DCC Shri Laloo P.G., and DDC Shri Boniprasada Rao also spoke. Over 100 participants (customs officials and exporters) attended, reaffirming commitment to transparent SEZ operations.



Bangalore SEZ

Interactive Session on SEZ Compliance (Brigade Tech Gardens SEZ) (Nov 14, 2024)

A physical interactive session on SEZ rules and compliance was held on November 14, 2024, at Brigade Tech Gardens SEZ, Bangalore. Organized by EPCES Bangalore and the SEZ's Authorised Officer, the meeting was exclusive to the SEZ developer and units. Mr. Madhusudan Rao (SCL Logistics & CHA, Bangalore) delivered a detailed presentation on key compliance obligations for SEZ units. Topics included monitoring development activities, customs regulations, SEZ Act provisions, export obligations, and labour and environmental laws. Customs Authorized Officer Ms. Athiya Sadath briefed units on timely approvals and documentation. Shri C.U. Poovaiah (RD, EPCES-CSEZ Karnataka Region) highlighted EPCES achievements and pending issues. About 40 unit



representatives attended. The session ensured that SEZ stakeholders clearly understood compliance procedures, from regulatory filings to waste management.

Noida SEZ

NSEZ Gate No.2 Inauguration (Oct 10, 2024)

On October 10, 2024, the Noida SEZ inaugurated Gate No.2 and a new Customs Examination Area. Shri Vimal Anand (Joint Secretary, Dept of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India) officially opened the gate. EPCES arranged participants (incl. SMEs and developers) and joined the ceremony. NSEZ's DC Shri Bipin Menon, along with EPCES's Shri Vilas Gupta (CGC member), Shri Sunil Puri (Regional Chairman), and other RGC members attended. Shri Anand inspected the new infrastructure, underscoring its role in easing cargo flow for exporters.



ICEGATE Implementation Meetings (Oct–Nov 2024)

- Oct 16, 2024: DG Systems held a virtual meeting on ICEGATE implementation. EPCES NSEZ joined with exporters to discuss migration issues. DG Systems assured that participants' concerns would be addressed.
- Nov 8, 2024: A virtual meeting with Principal DG Systems & Data Management focused on challenges faced by SEZ units migrating to ICEGATE. EPCES NSEZ coordinated unit participation.
- Nov 14, 2024: A hybrid meeting at NSEZ office (chaired by Pr. DG Systems Shri Yogendra Garg and DG EPCES Shri Alok Chaturvedi) addressed ICEGATE implementation for export, import, and DTA operations. Under Secretary Sumit Sachan (Commerce) and 46 physical + 35 online participants (including SEEPZ attendees) discussed unit concerns. DC SEEPZ also participated. Topics included timeline for Icegate rollout and support for units. Photographs were circulated post-event.
- Nov 19, 2024: DG Systems organized an online training on ICEGATE specifically for FTWZ (Free Trade & Warehousing Zones) units. EPCES NSEZ arranged attendees and Regional Director also participated. The webinar trained FTWZ unit representatives in customs filing on ICEGATE.

DG Systems Meetings (Nov 2024)

- Nov 25, 2024: DG Systems hosted a hybrid meeting (at Hotel Smart, New Delhi) on ICEGATE issues for FTWZ units. EPCES NSEZ joined online to participate.
- Nov 27, 2024: DG Systems held an online meeting on ICEGATE for child-user registration and joint shipping bill filing. EPCES NSEZ arranged participants and joined discussions.

These meetings addressed technical aspects of ICEGATE functionality for SEZ/FTWZ, ensuring exporters understood the new processes.

Meeting with DC Falta, Kolkata (Nov 28, 2024)



On November 28, 2024, EPCES led a meeting at DC Kolkata with Falta SEZ officials to discuss Bihar's new SEZs (Buxar and Champaran). Shri Tanu Aggarwal (DDG, EPCES Head Office) and the Regional Director (EPCES Noida) met Falta SEZ's DC. They discussed required infrastructure (inspection sheds, lighting, roads) for smooth cargo movement in Moradabad and proposed EPCES-organized outreach for Falta. The DC requested that EPCES arrange a seminar for Falta and IT units in Kolkata; plans were made for an upcoming outreach program.

Commerce Secretary Review (Dec 9, 2024)

On December 9, 2024, the Commerce Secretary chaired a review on SEZ units' migration to ICEGATE at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi. EPCES, JDC/SEEPZ, and DDC NSEZ attended, along with unit reps (Idemia Syscom, Gripwell, etc.). The meeting assessed progress on addressing migration challenges. The Commerce Ministry reiterated its commitment to expedited ICEGATE onboarding. EPCES representatives and DC NSEZ officials reiterated unit issues and suggestions for a seamless transition.

Delegation Visit to Moradabad SEZ (Nov 7, 2024)

A delegation led by Shri Vimal Anand (JS, Commerce) visited Moradabad SEZ on November 7, 2024. EPCES NSEZ Regional Chairman Shri Sunil Puri and CGC member Shri Vilas Gupta joined JS Anand and JDC Surinder Malik. They met Moradabad SEZ unit association to understand unit concerns: cargo entry points, need for inspection sheds, street lighting, and road widening. The delegation assured they would expedite infrastructure approvals (e.g., bypass road for export traffic) to support the SEZ exporters.

Madras Export Processing Zone (MEPZ) SEZ

Webinar on “SEZ Matters and Practical Challenges” (May 22, 2024)



On May 22, 2024, WTC Chennai and EPCES (with MEPZ-SEZ and BDO India) hosted an online webinar “SEZ Matters and Practical Challenges.” Over 300+ participants joined. Mr. Vivek (WTC) moderated and introduced speakers. DDC MEPZ Shri Prabhu Kumar

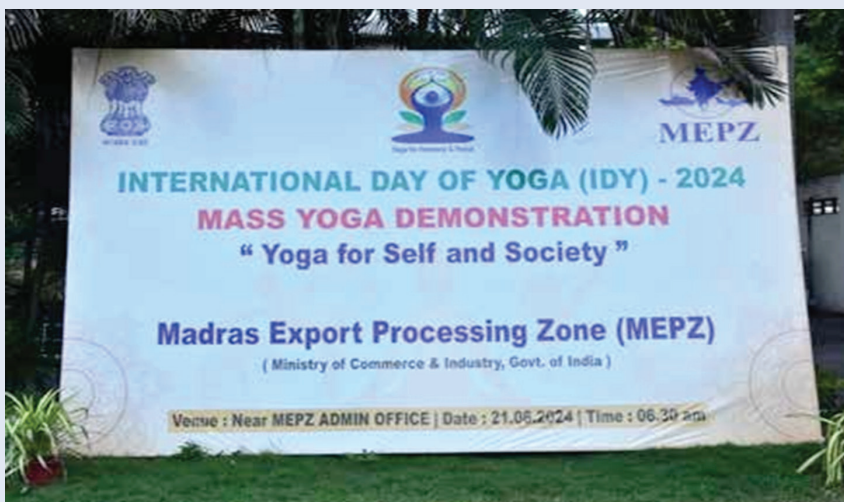
discussed SEZ evolution, TN's export performance, non-functional SEZ activation, and Make in India policy. Mr. Karthik Mani (BDO India) then detailed endorsements (past invoices), authorized services lists, and SEZ-GST law convergence. The session

covered endorsement provisions, GST vs SEZ law gaps (since Oct 2023), and DSPF form requirements. Participants' queries were addressed interactively. The webinar provided clarity on compliance issues for SEZ exporters. More than 200 employees took

advantage of the medical camp. Smt. Roshni Aorai Korati, IAS, JDC presented the mementos to the Doctors who participated in the Medical Camp.

International Yoga Day 2024 (June 21, 2024)

EPCES MEPZ partnered with the Central Council for Research in Siddha (Ayush Ministry) to celebrate International Yoga Day on June 21, 2024, at MEPZ. Over 500 women employees participated in morning yoga sessions. The event started with a Tamil invocation, followed by addresses from Dr. A. Rajendra Kumar (RO-Siddha, CCRS) and Prof. V. Banumathi (Former NIS Director), highlighting yoga's benefits. Deputy Mayor Shri G. Kamaraj and Tambaram Mayor Smt. K. Vasanthakumari were also present. Led by experienced instructors, participants performed various asanas for flexibility and relaxation. A healthy breakfast was served by CCRS. In the afternoon, advanced yoga demonstrations were held on the MEPZ lawn. A yoga quiz engaged attendees, and concluding speeches emphasized integrating yoga into daily life. MEPZ RD Shri Prabhu Kumar thanked all in his vote of thanks. The celebration fostered wellness and highlighted MEPZ's support for employee well-being.



Outreach Program and Open House for EOUs & DTA units on Trade Credit Insurance & Recent Developments, 25th October, 2024 in Goa



On 25 October 2024 in Goa, EPCES, together with the Development Commissioner's Office SEEPZ, organised an Outreach Program and Open House on Trade Credit Insurance and recent developments. The event was attended by Shri Gnyaneshwar Patil (IAS), DC SEEPZ; Shri CPS Chauhan (IRS), JDC SEEPZ; senior customs and CGST officers; ECGC Ltd (Associate Partner) and BDO India LLP (Knowledge Partner). Around 70 unit representatives participate.

Bangalore SEZ



Directorate General of Taxpayer Services (DGTS) CENTRAL BOARD OF INDIRECT TAXES & CUSTOMS Bengaluru Zonal Unit

in association with





TOPIC: "Customs Compliance Requirements of BIS, EPR & LMPC-An Overview"

Date and Time: -
Friday, 03rd January, 2025, 15:00 hrs Onwards.

Distinguished Speakers



Dr. Anil Kumar Sethi, I.R.S.,
Additional Director General,
Directorate General of Taxpayer Services,
Bengaluru Zonal Unit

Guest Speakers



Shri. K. G. Joshi
Chairman,
DGTS-CSEZ,
Karnataka Z. Unit



Shri. Pradyumn Kumar
President,
Bengaluru Customs House Agents Association (BCMAA)



Shri. Anil Kumar Sethi, I.R.S.,
Additional Director General,
Directorate General of Taxpayer Services,
Bengaluru Zonal Unit

Topic Speaker & Expert Panelists



Shri. Pradyumn Kumar
President,
Bengaluru Customs House Agents Association (BCMAA)



Shri. Anil Kumar Sethi, I.R.S.,
Additional Director General,
Directorate General of Taxpayer Services,
Bengaluru Zonal Unit

Vote of Thanks



Shri. Anil Kumar Sethi, I.R.S.,
Additional Director General,
Directorate General of Taxpayer Services,
Bengaluru Zonal Unit

Participation is being tracked on [WhatsApp](#), Participants will be given 1500/- on 03-01-2025.
The Link for joining the Session is
<https://t.me/centralboardindirecttaxesandcustoms>

Connect with DGTS India on WhatsApp

Link: <https://t.me/centralboardindirecttaxesandcustoms>



OR

SCAN THE QR CODE



CCBC

- BIS (Standards): Imported goods needing Bureau of Indian Standards certification (quality, safety).
- EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility): Obligations for managing plastic, e-waste, batteries, tyres; registration via CPCB portals.
- LMPC (Legal Metrology): Packaging laws requiring declarations (weight, MRP, manufacturer details).

Shri Pillai stressed the importance of compliance in today's economy, and retired IRS officer Shri M.G. Kondanram provided detailed overviews of each area. The session reinforced exporters' understanding of mandatory certifications and responsibilities for Indian imports.

MEPZ SEZ

ICEGATE Capacity Building Workshop (Jan 22, 2025)

EPCES, NSDL, and MEPZ Manufacturers' Association held a knowledge program on ICEGATE filing on January 22, 2025, at the MEPZ Conference Hall. Over 60 unit representatives attended. MEPZMA President Mr. P. Kesavan welcomed officials: MEPZ DDC Mr. K. Prabhu Kumar, SO Mr. S. Karthikeyan, and NSDL's Mr. Abishek and Mr. Subair. NSDL Database Management (IMEXIO) experts gave presentations. Key topics included: filing bills of entry, DTA sales (Advance Lic/DFIA/SEZ→EOU), job work, zone transfers, third-party exports, scrap sales, automated export filing, and amendments. NDML specialists demonstrated the IMEXIO platform, highlighting features like bulk DTA procurement filing, SMTP-based filing, API integration, and reports. EPCES RD S. Kalyani thanked the speakers and encouraged units to utilize IMEXIO for seamless ICEGATE transactions.



MEPZ SEZ Leadership Summit 2025 (Jan 23–24, 2025)



The MEPZ SEZ held its 2025 Leadership Summit (theme: "Leading Today and Shaping Tomorrow") on January 23–24, 2025. Industry leaders, policymakers, and experts convened to discuss enhancing SEZ competitiveness. A highlight was a panel discussion "Catalyzing Export Growth in the Age of Global Value Chains (GVCs)." Panelists included Ms. Rajalakshmi (Addl. DGFT, Chennai), Shri Alex Paul Menon (DC, MEPZ), Shri Ilan

Chelian (Sanmina India MD), Mr. Mikael Gislén (Gislen Software CEO), Ms. Rajalakshmi Srinivasan (Zoho Director), and Mr. Koichi Takahashi (Murata Electronics). It was moderated by Shri Sunil Rallan (Chairman & CEO, J Matadee Free Trade Zone). Key takeaways: strategies for integrating Indian businesses into GVCs, attracting high-value investments, fostering innovation, and using data/tech for export efficiency. The summit also featured an outbound training ("Building Synergy for Peak Performance") by Maven Consulting for MEPZ staff. DC MEPZ Shri Menon closed the summit, reaffirming MEPZ's commitment to a clean, green, safe, and inclusive SEZ environment.

Republic Day 2025 Celebration (Jan 26, 2025)

On India's 76th Republic Day (Jan 26, 2025), the MEPZ SEZ celebrated with a flag hoisting ceremony led by Shri Alex Paul Menon (DC, MEPZ) and the national anthem. In his address, Shri Menon emphasized the Constitution's values and MEPZ's role in economic growth through exports and jobs. Quoting Mahatma Gandhi ("No culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive"), he highlighted social inclusion, particularly the plight of the transgender community. He noted Tamil Nadu's pioneering welfare schemes for transgenders (IDs, reservations)

but pointed out only ~6% are formally employed. He urged SEZ industries to adopt inclusive policies (hiring, skill training, gender-neutral facilities, entrepreneurship support). Reiterating "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas...Sabka Prayas," he called for collective effort towards inclusivity. The ceremony included unveiling a Dr. B.R. Ambedkar statue (symbolizing justice and equality). Employees, management, and families participated enthusiastically, reflecting MEPZ's commitment to unity and diversity.

MEPZ Run 2025 (March 2, 2025)



The 9th annual MEPZ Run (02 March 2025) saw widespread participation as a "Green MEPZ" initiative. Over 500 runners from Chennai joined professional and fitness categories (21.1 km, 10 km, 5 km). The race was flagged off by Shri Abin Dinesh Modak (IPS, Commissioner, Tambaram Police) as Chief Guest, with Shri Samay Singh Meena (IPS, Dy. Comm., Tambaram) as Special Guest, in the presence of Shri Menon (Zonal DC, MEPZ). The women's 10K category winners received prizes amid cheering. Hon. Commissioner Modak praised the event's focus on health and community engagement and lauded MEPZ's environmental commitment (the Run was dedicated to sustainability). The MEPZ Run has become a popular annual tradition, fostering camaraderie among employees and residents. Organizers Mr. Prabhu Kumar (DDC, MEPZ) and Mr. Kesavan (MEPZMA President) acknowledged volunteers and sponsors. The overwhelming turnout bodes well for an even larger MEPZ Run in 2026.

Women's Day Celebration at MEPZ (March 8, 2025)



MEPZ SEZ celebrated International Women's Day with an inspiring event on March 8, 2025. The program began at 11:00 AM with a welcome by Shri Prabhu Kumar (DDC, MEPZ) and the Tamil Thaivazhthu. Speakers included Tmt. Jacintha Lazarus, IAS (ED, FCI Chennai) as keynote, who spoke on women in leadership. Tmt. Rukmini Thiagarajan (IG, DGR) and career coach Tmt. Manju K. Manohar shared motivational messages. Mementos were presented to all dignitaries. Shri Ashwin (DDC, MEPZ) gave an address on empowerment. A session on work-life balance was conducted by Tmt. Bharathy Karunanidhi (Head of Finance, Mahindra & Mahindra). The afternoon featured interactive activities:

a quiz on Women's Day trivia, a group dance by MEPZ women employees, and a fun game ("First to Find Gets the Seat"). The celebration fostered empowerment, learning, and camaraderie among the predominantly female workforce. Vote of thanks

was delivered by Tmt. Jennifer Divita (DDC, MEPZ). The event underscored MEPZ's commitment to celebrating women's contributions and promoting gender equality.

One-Day Workshop on AEO Programme for PGAs (Mar 2025)



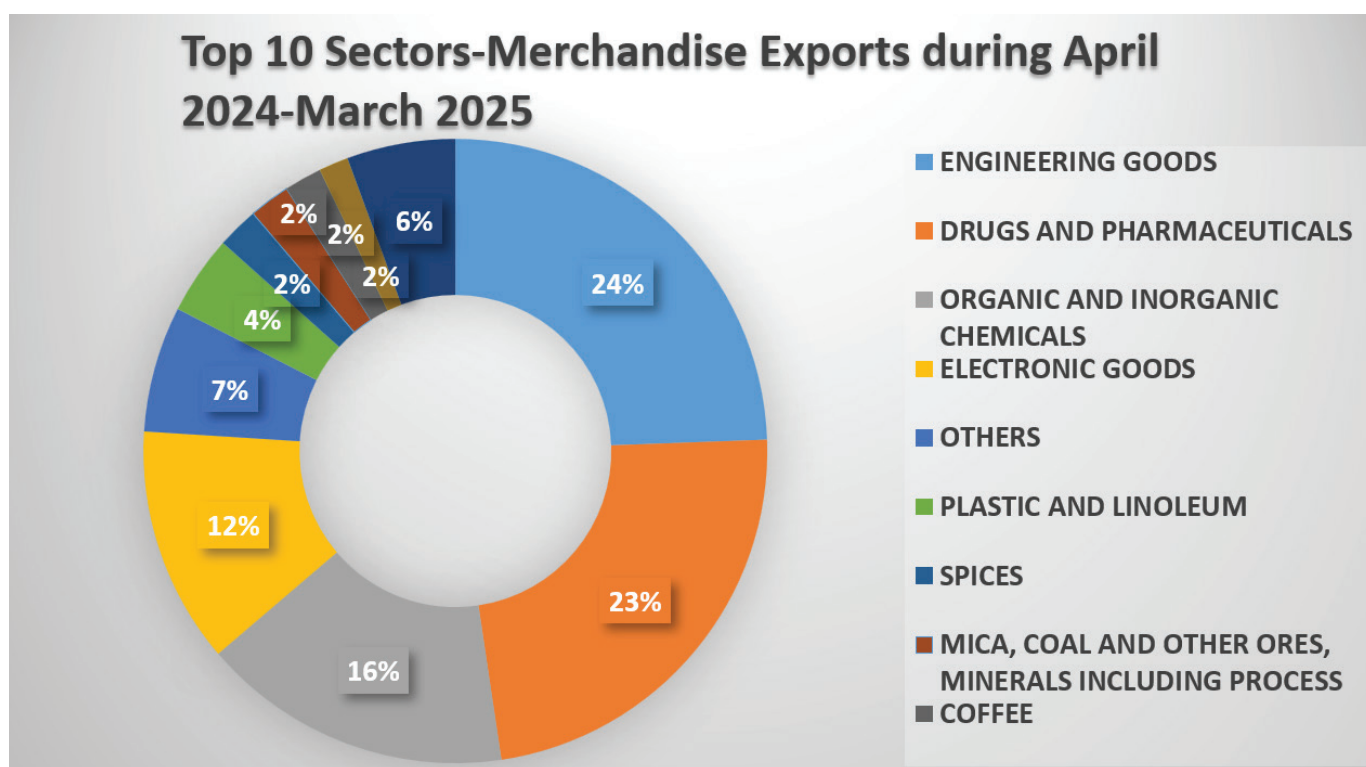
Vishakhapatnam SEZ

Seminar: Market Access Initiative Scheme (March 12, 2025)



On March 12, 2025, EPCES-Vizag (in association with the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce, AP & Telangana) organized a seminar at the VSEZ Conference Hall (3-5 PM) on the "Market Access Initiative

Scheme for Export Promotion Activities in the U.S." The program educated exporters on U.S. Market Access Initiative (MAI) grants, usage of market development funds, and strategies for U.S. export promotion. EPCES officers presented success stories and how SEZ units can leverage MAI for marketing in the U.S. The seminar was attended by around 40 SEZ members and PESB exporters, and included Q&A with MAI scheme officials.



Membership Status for FY 2024-25 (as on March 31, 2025)

		MEMBERSHIP RENEWED				NEW MEMBER ENROLLED				TOTAL MEMBERS			
S. No.	ZONE	EOU	SEZ	Dev/Co-Dev	Total	EOU	SEZ	Dev/Co-Dev	Total	EOU	SEZ	Dev/Co-Dev	Total
1	CSEZ Karnataka	184	437	48	669	18	33	5	56	202	470	53	725
2	CSEZ Kerala	52	470	36	558	2	53		55	54	523	36	613
3	Falta SEZ	14	88	10	112		1		1	14	89	10	113
4	Kandla SEZ	84	841	37	962	8	248	5	261	92	1089	42	1223
5	MEPZ - Chennai	225	669	67	961	39	62	5	106	264	731	72	1067
6	Noida SEZ	102	733	48	883	4	47		51	106	780	48	934
7	SEEPZ - Mumbai	150	639	48	837	13	39	3	55	163	678	51	892
8	VSEZ	101	493	80	674	7	19	5	31	108	512	85	705
Total		912	4370	374	5656	91	502	23	616	1003	4872	397	6272

EPCES Membership Status

ZONES									
Year	Cochin SEZ	Falta SEZ	Kandla SEZ	MEPZ Chennai	Noida SEZ	SEEPZ Mumbai	VSEZ	Total	
2016-17	304	83	245	429	410	273	369	2113	
2017-18	455	76	279	450	411	252	468	2391	
2018-19	540	82	332	480	449	254	466	2603	
2019-20	624	98	357	569	517	380	487	3032	
2020-21	967	119	528	716	808	683	624	4445	
2021-22	1041	125	623	743	846	740	646	4764	
2022-23	1217	122	763	846	897	844	704	5393	
2023-24	1296	119	1029	984	937	888	718	5971	
2024-25	1338	113	1223	1067	934	892	705	6272	