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Engineering exports decline by 10%

Financial Express

1 November 2012, New Delhi: Engineering exports declined by about 10% to \$ 27.81 billion in the first half of the current fiscal due to slowdown in major western economies.

The exports had totalled \$ 30.89 billion in April- September period of the last fiscal. The decline was 8.2% in September. "The countries which are the principal trade partners of India, such as Germany and other EU countries are under economic slowdown, and this has affected our exports severely," EEPC India chairman Aman Chadha said. Joint secretary in the commerce ministry, Sumanta Chaudhuri, stressed upon diversification of destinations to deal with the ongoing slowdown in major markets. India exports engineering items such as transport equipment, capital goods, other machinery/equipment and light engineering products like castings, forgings and fasteners.

To promote engineering exports, EEPC India in association with Ministry of Commerce and Industry organises India Show in different parts of the world. The last India show was organised at Brno, Czech Republic in September. Ambassador of Czech Republic Miloslav Stasek, who was also present at the press conference, said his country attaches highest importance to economic engagements with India.

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Exports to drive Gujarat medical device biz

Sohini Das, Business Standard

20 November 2012, Ahmedabad: Gujarat-based SME medical device-makers are gearing up for growth, as a number of initiatives in the sector start taking shape. For starters, the SMEs are looking to increase their share in exports, as the West European markets offer opportunities for polymer-based medical devices.

Around 20 companies have already taken possession of land at the upcoming medical devices cluster at Sanand, jointly developed by the Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation and National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education & Research. Around 40 companies had signed MoUs with the government to set up units in the 100-acre park.

Even more significantly, some 20 small-scale manufacturers have come together to form a special purpose vehicle (SPV) to set up a common component manufacturing facility near Ahmedabad. The upcoming Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors' Summit in January 2013 will also host an event on medical device technology where state-based medical device-makers are expected to meet overseas buyers. The SPV, called Ahmedabad Medical Disposable Devices, is scouting for land near Ahmedabad, said Mitesh Vyas, owner of Jimit Medico Surgicals, and a member of the group. The Rs 15-crore facility would supply components to all the member companies in the SPV, he added.

D L Pandya, advisor to the SPV and also programme coordinator of the National Biomedical Engineering Society, said, "The common component facility will certainly help to improve the quality of the products."

A feasibility study for the project has been conducted by Gujarat Industrial and Technical Consultancy Organisation Limited (GITCO). The SPV has also applied for a subsidy from the Union ministry of commerce through the state industries commissioner.

"An in-principle nod from the Centre is expected soon. Under the Central scheme, 70 per cent of the total equipment cost is funded by the Centre in the form of a subsidy. This works out to roughly Rs 10 crore," Vyas said.

State-based SMEs are working on improving product quality, as they gear up to tap the export market. There are around 200 medical device making companies in Gujarat with a turnover of roughly around Rs 250-300 crore, industry insiders estimated. Around 25-30 per cent of the net production is exported.

At present, countries in Africa and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region comprise the bulk of the medical device exports from the region, while the share of European countries is around 10-15 per cent at the moment. However, companies are gearing up for exports to European nations as well.

As Pandya points out, cluster development initiatives by government agencies as well as non-profit organisations in the last four to five years has resulted in Gujarat-based device-makers opting for both ISO and CE certifications. From just a couple of companies having CE certifications a couple of years back, the number has gone up to around 40 companies.

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Govt may impose anti-dumping duty on gypsum plaster boards

PTI

New Delhi, 25 February 2013: India may impose anti-dumping duty of up to USD 73.8 per cubic metre on imports of gypsum plaster boards, except certain varieties like fire boards, from China, Indonesia, Thailand and UAE to protect domestic players.

The gypsum plaster boards are mainly used in interior construction in suspended ceiling and partition applications.

In its final findings, the Directorate General of Anti-dumping and Allied Duties (DGAD) has recommended imposition of the duty on 'Plain Gypsum Plaster Boards' originating in or exported from China, Indonesia, Thailand and UAE, the Commerce Ministry said in a notification.

The DGAD's recommendation comes on the basis of its findings that increased imports have caused "material injury" to the domestic industry, it said.

Mumbai-based Saint-Gobain Gyproc India Ltd had filed a petition for imposing anti-dumping duty on behalf of the domestic industry.

The directorate has recommended different set of duties that ranged between USD 12.3 per cubic meter and USD 73.8 per cubic meter, the notification said.

The DGAD, which is under the Commerce Ministry, in its recommendations said that the boards have been exported to India below its normal value from these nations. "...the Authority is of the view that imposition of definitive Anti-dumping duty is required to offset dumping and injury," it added. The restrictive duty is recommended by the Commerce Ministry, while the Finance Ministry imposes the same.

However, it said that fire heat boards, impact boards, gypsum ceiling boards with moisture barrier, heat boards, anti-mold boards, thermal boards, gypsum ceiling boards with aluminium edges sealed in white film and ceiling tiles may escape the restrictive duty.

The country has already imposed anti-dumping duty on imports of fabric, yarn, nylon tyre cord and several chemicals.

Unlike safeguard duties, which are levied in a uniform way, anti-dumping duties vary from product to product and from country to country. Countries initiate anti-dumping probes to check if domestic industry has been hurt because of a surge in below-cost imports. As a counter-measure, they impose duties under the multilateral WTO regime.

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Dumping duty on plaster boards from China, 3 other nations

K. R. Srivats, Business Line (The Hindu)

New Delhi, 15 April 2013: The Finance Ministry has imposed definitive anti-dumping duty on certain gypsum plaster boards imported from China, Indonesia, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates.

The levy does not apply to fire boards, impact boards, ECHO boards, heat boards and thermal boards. This anti-dumping duty will be valid for five years with effect from June 7, 2012, the date of imposition of provisional anti-dumping duty.

Saint Gobain Gyproc India Ltd had filed the petition seeking anti-dumping probe on gypsum plaster boards imported from these four countries.

In the case of gypsum plaster boards produced and exported from China, the duty has been pegged at \$32.85 per cubic metre. For imports from Indonesia, it has been pegged at \$24.11 per cubic metre.

In the case of Thailand, the anti-dumping duty for plaster boards produced and exported by Siam Gypsum Industry (Saraburi) Co Ltd and Siam Gypsum Industry (Songkhla) Co Ltd has been pegged at \$54.46 per cubic metre.

For other producers and exporters from Thailand, the anti-dumping duty has been pegged at \$73.80 per cubic metre.

In the case of the UAE, the duty for plaster boards produced and exported by Gypsemna Co (L.L.C) Dubai has been pegged at \$12.30 per cubic metre. For all other producers and exporters from the UAE, the Revenue Department has imposed duty of \$20.15 per cubic metre.

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US, EU oppose India's proposed quality regulations for imported toys

Amiti Sen, Economic Times

New Delhi, September 8, 2012: The US and EU have opposed India's proposed quality regulations for imported toys, saying the legislation requires disclosure of extensive information by manufacturers.

The draft legislation, called Toys and Toy Products Compulsory Registration order, makes it mandatory for imported toys to be tested for toxic chemicals and registered in India before being sold to consumers.

Both the US and the EU have demanded that India should incorporate their suggestions and make the legislation framing process more transparent so that all concerns are addressed.

India, however, maintains that extensive bilateral consultations have already been held on the issue and the draft legislation, once framed, would be placed before the World Trade Organisation.

"Most countries frame laws to protect consumers on their own. We, too, are aware of our sovereign rights," an official told ET, adding, "At the same time, we do not want to keep the world guessing. So, we would definitely put up the draft legislation before the WTO."

The legislation is being prepared by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), which is under the consumer affairs ministry, in consultation with the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, the nodal body for FDI policy.

"The BIS is continuously carrying out tests on the toxins that contaminate our toys and is upgrading the quality norms. The proposed order on registration of toys is to ensure that all our imports, too, strictly adhere to domestic standards," the official said.

Imports account for almost half of India's toy market, estimated at about \$1.5 billion. It is expected to touch \$2.6 billion by 2015, according to a recent study by industry body Assocham.

In 2009, India had banned import of toys from China over fears that the country was being flooding with cheap products that contained harmful chemicals. India, however, was forced to withdraw the ban after China complained to the WTO of being singled out.

In response to growing pressure from consumer activists, the BIS revised its toy safety standards last year, building in requirements for phthalate, a harmful chemical used for softening toys. The new compulsory registration order will ensure that imported toys are regulated on the same lines as domestic ones, the official said.

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Govt initiates probe into dumping of clear float glass

PTI

New Delhi, 7 June 2013: The government has initiated a probe into alleged dumping of a particular variety of glass, used in interior construction in suspended ceiling and partition applications, by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and UAE following complaints by domestic players.

The Commerce Ministry's designated authority, the Directorate General of Anti-Dumping and Allied Duties (DGAD), has begun an investigation into alleged dumping of "clear float glass of nominal thicknesses ranging from 4mm to 12mm (both inclusive)"

Three domestic industries - Gold Plus Glass Industry, HNG Float Glass and Saint-Gobain Glass India Ltd have jointly filed the application for investigation.

In a notification, the DGAD has said that the petitioners have provided sufficient evidence that the normal value of the chemical in the three countries are significantly higher than the net export price.

The evidences have prima-facie indicated that the product is being dumped from these nations, it said.

"...the Authority (DGAD) hereby initiates an investigation into the alleged dumping and consequent injury to the domestic industry...to determine the existence, degree and effect of any alleged dumping and to recommend the amount of antidumping duty, which if levied, would be adequate to remove the injury to the domestic industry," it said.

The period of investigation is from October 2011 to December 2012. However, for the purpose of analyzing injury, the data of previous three years of 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2011-12 would also be considered, it added.

After completion of the probe, the DGAD, if needed, would recommend the duty and the finance ministry would impose it.

Countries initiate an anti-dumping probe to determine whether their domestic industries have been hurt because of surge in cheap imports of any product. As a counter-measure, they impose duties under the multilateral regime of the WTO.

The duty is aimed at ensuring fair trading practices and creating a level-playing field for domestic producers vis-a- vis foreign producers and exporters resorting to dumping.

Unlike the safeguard duty, which is levied in a uniform way, anti-dumping duty varies from product to product and country to country.

India has initiated 275 anti-dumping investigations between 1992 and March 2012, involving 42 countries.

The countries prominently figuring in anti-dumping investigations are China, Korea and Singapore and the major product categories on which anti-dumping duty has been levied are chemicals and petrochemicals, pharmaceutical, steel and consumer goods.

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