

**Chairman's Pen**

*My dear fellow exporters,*

*I wish to draw the attention of the Government to the rise in lending rates that have hit the exporters. It is my belief that the high lending rate has set back India a few notches when it comes to competitiveness in global markets. Finance costs are 12% to 15% in India, while it is 4% in China. Congestion at port adds to the cost. Freight charges are 40% to 50% more compared to that of China or Singapore. Shipments are held 3-4 days in some cases. We believe there is a need for interest rate rationalization with tenures of 10 to 15 years for the SME sector.*

*A Technology Upgradation Fund for the engineering sector is also required. China scores over India primarily because they are sound in technology. The Government has to consider our demand compassionately as 70% of the engineering sector is dominated by SMEs which cannot afford high-tech machines on their own.*

*Yours sincerely,*

  
(AMAN CHADHA)