

Chairman's Pen



My dear fellow exporters,

I am very happy to inform you that DEPB Scheme has finally got the nod of Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs for an extension for a period of one more year w.e.f. 1.4.06 to 31.3.07. It is expected that the Government would be able to work out an acceptable alternative to the DEPB Scheme during this period.

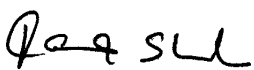
We are happy to note that India and the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have decided to accelerate finalization of the Free Trade Area Agreement and enforce the framework agreement for economic cooperation which includes joint ventures in the sectors of energy, communications and petrochemicals. This, it is expected, will boost up our economy.

It is understood from a media report that Pakistan has decided not to give Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to India, even under the recently ratified South Asia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA). Pakistan's refusal to give MFN status to India is a blow to the country which had assumed that ratification of SAFTA would automatically lead to the extension of MFN as the agreement envisages a duty free trading area within SAARC countries. The decision taken by Pakistan would limit India to get preferential access only on the items which are presently mentioned in the positive list, and it will be a serious set back for Indian engineering exporters to enhance the quantum of exports of other items which are kept out of the ambit of exportable items to Pakistan.

As a part of EEPC's promotional event, your Council organised Afro-India Reverse BSM on 28th, 29th and 30th March, 2006 in Chennai, Mumbai and New Delhi respectively coupled with Indo-ASEAN Reverse BSM on 29th & 30th March in Mumbai and New Delhi respectively. I will come back to you with brief outcome of these two events in the next column.

It was really heartening that Western Region of the Council had rewarded meritorious exporters of engineering goods and services of the region for their outstanding export performance in 2003-04 at its Regional Export Award Presentation Function on March 25, 2006 in Mumbai which was coincided with the Golden Jubilee Celebration of the EEPC, Western Region where Shri Jayant Rajaram Patil, Hon'ble Minister of Finance & Planning, Government of Maharashtra graced the occasion as Guest of Honor and gave away the Awards to the meritorious exporters of this region. The Hon'ble Minister assured exporters that VAT return will be made within 4 months to exporters in Mumbai.

Yours sincerely,


(RAKESH SHAH)