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Guidelines for the Implementation of the Initiative

Districts as Export Hubs

The Districts as Export Hubs (DEH) initiative, launched by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) under the Department of Commerce, aims to promote export activities, manufacturing, and employment generation at the grassroots level. This initiative aligns with the AtmaNirbhar Bharat Mission, Make in India vision, and the Vocal for Local campaign, emphasizing the economic potential of each district in India. The DEH initiative, introduced in August 2019, seeks to foster balanced regional development by transforming districts into export hubs. The initiative identifies products and services with export potential in all districts and establishes institutional mechanisms such as State Export Promotion Committees (SEPC) and District Export Promotion Committees (DEPC) to support export promotion and address bottlenecks. The DEH initiative also includes efforts to enhance e-commerce exports and organize outreach events to educate and support local exporters.

To enhance stakeholder engagement, it is essential to increase the frequency of consultations with exporters, industry associations, and other stakeholders to gather feedback and address challenges more effectively. Encouraging public-private partnerships can leverage expertise and resources from both sectors, fostering a collaborative environment for export promotion.

The following guidelines outline the actions to be undertaken at the district level to promote exports, as part of the State Business Reform Action Plan (SBRAP) 2024. All District Industries Centres (DICs) are directed to implement these instructions promptly.

District Level Export Promotion Committee (DEPC)

District Industries Centres (DICs) must organize District Export Promotion Committee (DEPC) meetings at least quarterly. These meetings can be held either physically or online. The meetings should be convened based on the time line and the minutes must be submitted to the Directorate of Industries and Commerce in due course.

The DEPC is established to facilitate foreign market access for domestic enterprises. The committee is chaired by the District Collector. Key members include the Joint Director General of Foreign Trade, the General Manager of the District Industries Centre, and the Principal Agricultural Officer of the District. Other members include representatives from banks, MSME-DI, NABARD, the Export Promotion Council, the Quality Council of India, and trade/commerce associations. For further details on the composition and purpose of the DEPCs, refer to notification no. G1/42/2020/ID dated 11/09/2020.

The DEPC is responsible for creating and periodically reviewing a District Export Action Plan (DEAP). This plan should outline the district's export potential, key products, infrastructure, and strategies. The DEAP must be prepared and submitted to the Directorate of Industries and Commerce. Additionally, exporters should be informed about the initiatives under SBRAP and the requirement to include the district of origin and district of procurement in the DGCIS portal.

The DEPC should establish a baseline of the current export promotion situation in the district to measure progress. Data on merchants and manufacturer exporters should be gathered to understand the export landscape better. Export-related issues should be addressed, escalated, and monitored to ensure they are resolved promptly. Training programs, seminars, guest lectures, and practical training sessions should be organized to educate exporters. Collaboration with the State Level Nodal Officer for export promotion is essential to align district efforts with state-level strategies. The DEPC should serve as a single point of contact for export promotion at the district level, providing support and guidance to exporters.

Training programs, seminars, guest lectures, and practical training sessions should be organized to educate exporters. Collaboration with the State Level Nodal Officer for export promotion is essential to align district efforts with state-level strategies. Establishing mentorship programs where experienced

exporters guide new entrants can further support this effort, ensuring a continuous transfer of knowledge and best practices.

District Export Action Plan (DEAP)

The DEAP must be developed by the DEPC. This plan should identify key products and infrastructure unique to the district, tailoring export strategies to local strengths and opportunities. The DEAP should include quantifiable targets to measure progress and success.

The DEAP must cover the district's export potential, highlighting key products and sectors. It should provide detailed information on infrastructure that supports export activities and outline strategies to leverage the district's unique advantages to boost exports. The DEAP must be published on the designated online portal to ensure accessibility and transparency. It should be periodically reviewed and updated to reflect changes and new opportunities.

Export Data and Reporting

All exporters must accurately report the District of Origin for their goods, clearly differentiating it from the District of Procurement. This distinction is crucial for accurate data collection and analysis. Exporters should be instructed to include the district of origin and district of procurement in the DGCIS portal. The DGCIS portal link should be prominently displayed on the State Single Window System/District Administration portal to increase visibility and accessibility of export data for stakeholders.

Yearly export performance and district-level export data should be collected and compiled to track progress and identify trends. Regular consultations with stakeholders are necessary to review the adoption of district of origin reporting by exporters and address any challenges. District-specific details should be uploaded to the portal to maintain up-to-date information. The list of exporters in the district should be shared with the Directorate to facilitate better coordination and support.

Online Portal and Nodal officer

A dedicated online platform is being developed for stakeholders to access all District Export Action Plans. This platform will serve as a comprehensive resource hub, offering critical insights into export initiatives. The platform shall include action plans for each district, contact details of nodal officers,

minutes of DEPC and SEPC meetings, export-related data from DGCIS, lists of exporters, products, and quantities, contact details for export hubs, and any related information and news. District Export Action Plans should be regularly updated on the portal to provide the most current information to stakeholders.

A Nodal Officer should be appointed in each district to coordinate export activities and serve as the main point of contact. Two coordinators should be assigned to assist the District Nodal Officer in managing export-related tasks. The District Nodal Officer will act as the single point of contact for all export-related activities, ensuring streamlined communication and support. Regular meetings with exporters from all sectors should be conducted to discuss challenges, opportunities, and strategies. State government branding initiatives should be supported to enhance the visibility and reputation of district exports.

Conclusion

District General Managers are requested to diligently adhere to these guidelines, ensure full compliance, and actively support the successful implementation of these reforms.

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