



First Meeting of the Foreign Trade and Investment Committee, PHDCCI

Saturday, 16th December 2017, PHD Chamber, New Delhi

Minutes of the Meeting

The first meeting of the **Foreign Trade and Investment Committee of PHD Chamber**, under the Chairpersonship of Ms. Priyanka Mittal and Co-Chairmanship of Shri G S Singhvi and Shri Sanjay Beswal was conducted on Saturday, 16th December 2017 at PHD Chamber, New Delhi. The record of attendance is annexed.

The meeting was attended by Chairperson of the Foreign Trade and Investment Committee, PHDCCI Ms. Priyanka Mittal, Director, KRBL Limited, Mr. G S Singhvi, Co-Chairman, Foreign Trade and Investment Committee, PHDCCI and Managing Director, Hindustan Fibres Ltd and Mr. Sanjay Beswal, Co-Chairman, Foreign Trade and Investment Committee, PHDCCI and Director, Andees Impex Private Limited. Special Invitees of the meeting were Dr. V K Kaul, Head, Department of Business Economics, University of Delhi, South Campus, Dr. Gulshan Sachdeva, Professor, Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Dr. S K Mohanty, Professor, Research & Information System (RIS) and Mr. Mahesh C. Verma, Director, IC Centre for Governance. The members who participated in the meeting were Mr. Surinder K Kalra, Consultant, S.K.Kalra and Associates, Mr. Amitava Ray, Executive Director, Uflex Limited, Mr. S N Dua, Corporate Advisor, Industrial cables, Mr. Anay Gupta, Director, Vinko Auto Industries Limited, Mr. Ashok Maheshwari, Partner, Ashok Maheshwary & Associates, Mr. V P Verma, Tax & Corporate Advisor, V P Verma & Associates, Mr. V K Gupta, Director, Nirman, Mr. Rajesh Sehgal, Director, Lord Krishna Productions, Mr. S Visweswaran, Director, Akilaja Computer Technology, Mr. Gagan Sinha, Director BD, Delton Cables and Ms. Shriya Gupta, BD, Delton Cables.

First Meeting of the Foreign Trade and Investment Committee



Participants at the first meeting of Foreign Trade and Investment Committee, 16th December 2017, PHD Chamber, New Delhi

The Chairperson of the committee welcomed the members to the PHD Chamber. The members introduced themselves and were briefed on the objective of the meeting. Subsequently, the agenda of the meeting was discussed in detail.

At the outset, **Ms. Priyanka Mittal, Chairperson, Foreign Trade and Investment Committee, PHDCCI** and Director, KRBL Limited highlighted the importance of agriculture and food processing sector in the Indian economy. She stated that an interactive session with Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) on Mid-term review of Foreign Trade policy will be organized and members' feedback will be taken for further enhancement. She suggested to conduct a mega conclave not only on FTAs but also WTO comprehensively bilateral and multilateral agreements. She added that sector specific programmes will also be focused in the future such as agri and food processing and textiles. She added that it is very relevant with the current focus of the Government on enhancing textile exports which was very evident in the current mid-term review of Foreign Trade Policy rolling out lot of incentives on textiles and apparels sectors given that its huge employment generating potential. She emphasized on doing a program on India's services sector given its significance not only in the Indian economy but also on global trade negotiations. Ms. Mittal suggested to conduct a workshop on trade facilitation especially for exporters and importers. She also suggested on organising an event on market access and export opportunities where market access will be looked upon not only from trade perspective but also preventing market access because of Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs). She also mentioned about the Ambassadors Meet which is conducted in March every year, committee will aggressively work towards organizing this prestigious meet.

Mr. G S Singhvi, Co-Chairman, Foreign Trade and investment Committee, PHDCCI and Managing Director, Hindustan Fibres Ltd, suggested to arrange meetings with the delegates who are visiting India and are interested in India's trade and business. Mr. Singhvi suggested to invite delegates visiting Indian Council of Culture Relation (ICCR) for Art and Culture performance at PHD Chamber, New Delhi. He also suggested to coordinate meetings with

foreign business delegates visiting India and coordination of PHDCCI delegates visiting overseas to explore trade and investment opportunities.

Mr. Sanjay Beswal, Co-Chairman, Foreign Trade and Investment Committee, PHDCCI and Director, Andees Impex Pvt. Ltd. emphasized to focus on policy advocacy with the Government and disseminating the information to the members in addition to conducting the programs and seminars which can enhance trade facilitation. He opined that suggestions should be provided by the members for preparing a strong representation for the DGFT (Directorate General of Foreign Trade). He further added that suggestions should be provided by the members on Customs Act in order to send a representation to the authorities. He also invited suggestions from the members to facilitate trade particularly on Foreign Trade Policy and Custom Act in the coming times.

Dr S P Sharma, Chief Economist, PHD Chamber discussed about Trade and Investment Facilitation Services (TIFS) and how it is facilitating the members. He informed the members that Trade and Investment Facilitation Services (TIFS) is a vital component for international trade and investment community. It is envisioned to facilitate firms across the globe for trade and investments in India while simultaneously meeting India's rapidly growing appetite for new markets to enhance trade and investments. TIFS is an information and advisory hub to provide requisite and detailed information to facilitate national and international business firms to invest in India; advising them on prospective business opportunities in India in general and in States and promising sectors in particular.

Dr. V K Kaul, Head, Department of Business Economics, University of Delhi, South Campus stated that there is a need to explore and exploit opportunities by the enterprises. He added that the Government is undertaking lot of things for exploring trade and investment avenues like pushing for Africa, hence there is a need to exploit the same by the Indian businesses. Going ahead, there is a need to develop our own strategy to exploit the opportunities keeping in mind the other constraints and challenges.

Dr Gulshan Sachdeva, Professor, Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University suggested that the programme on Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) should be more focused and precise so that fruitful outcome can be achieved and suggestions can be submitted to the Government. He also added that there is a need to critically examine and analyze what have been done and what is required to be done on the agreements by involving all the members so that a sound representation is presented to the Government.

Dr. S K Mohanty, Professor, Research & Information System (RIS) discussed about the two schools of thoughts towards the relevance of FTAs in the context of India where one states that it is not going in the right direction and having implications on country's trade deficit, while the other is very much in favour of FTAs. He suggested that the committee should focus on fisheries sector where India has got a tremendous potential and is linked not only to large corporate firms but also to livelihood security of small firms. He further added that India is facing stiff competition in the garment sector from two different segments- the lower segment from Bangladesh and the upper segment from- Sri Lanka while Mauritius has

graduated from low garment industry to high tech textiles. Thus, a transition is required in this area and for this more preparation needs to be done.

Mr. M. C. Verma, Director, IC Centre for Governance stated that India should focus on the services export as it has a great potential in this area and Africa is the nation which should be focused in terms of exports. He added that the Government should design the subsidies in such a manner that it is not objected by the other countries. He further added that raising or reducing the tariffs suddenly may not be feasible but it will also not be helpful either to the consumers or the exporters in India and therefore at whatever amount the tariffs are settled, they should prevail for at least sometime.

Mr. Surinder Kalra, Consultant, S.K. Kalra and Associates mentioned that with the changing global scenario, there is a need to brainstorm on formulating effective strategy for the Government of India along with the exploring agreements on new products for an exporter. He suggested that new geographies should be looked upon in terms of export destinations. He further emphasised that ground realities should be considered while looking at the problems of the exporters keeping in view the rules and regulations. According to him, guidance should be given to the exporters especially when they have skilled labour and factories. He also suggested that India should explore possibilities for upcoming Olympics in 2020 to be held in Tokyo for the supply of manufactured products like sports goods and t-shirts in order to promote make in India program.

Mr. S. N. Dua, Corporate Advisor, Industrial cables discussed about the impediments faced by the exporters and urged the need to improve the facilitation by reducing the cost of exports while making the process of imports more easy and convenient. He suggested on preparing a study on how material handling and efficient working of the ports can be improved and boost our overall foreign trade. He mentioned about reduction in the prolonged transportation time taken particularly by the Northern States which will be beneficial for both importers and exporters. He further suggested to brainstorm on the subject -Are the tariffs supporting to make value addition in India or not need to be focused upon.

Mr. Ashok Maheshwary, Partner, Ashok Maheshwary & Associates mentioned about the high cost of funds as the exporters in India competes with the international markets and therefore suggested to appeal to the Government to give more subsidies. He further mentioned that possibilities should be explored for the exporters to lower their cost of funds in order to raise their volume of exports. He urged for subsidies for service industry and in response to that Shri Sanjay Beswal, Co-Chairman, Foreign Trade and Investment Committee informed him that about 7% incentives available for services on account of certain eligibility criteria.

Mr. Rajesh Sehgal, Director and Writer, Lord Krishna Productions, highlighted the fact that the PHD Chamber is active in the same line of policies that the Government is promoting like Digital India and Start Up India but it should also focus on the international events like connecting with Australia in the next Common Wealth Games in areas of tourism and sports.

Mr. S Visweswaran, Director, Akilaja Computer Technology appreciated the points suggested by Shri Sanjay Bewsal, Co-Chairman, Foreign trade and Investment Committee on subsidies for services sector. He stated that with the application of GST, service exporters are facing issues related to procedural GST applications and requested for ease of process of documentation for GST on services.

Shri Gagan Sinha, Director BD, Delton Cables mentioned that aggressive marketing must be undertaken for spreading awareness about policies by the Government and coordinate with embassies to organize interaction with them so that our members are benefitted.

Other members including **Mr. Amitava Ray, Executive Director, Uflex Limited, Mr. V P Verma, Tax & Corporate Advisor, V P Verma & Associates, Mr. Anay Gupta, Director, Vinko Auto Industries Limited, Mr. V K Gupta, Director, Nirman** shared their views on the current scenario of exports and suggested to spread awareness on the schemes and incentives related to the exports and take up specific suggestions from the committee members in order to approach to DGFT for addressing the same

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks by Chairperson Ms. Priyanka Mittal.

Record of Attendance:

Chair and Co-Chair-

1. Ms. Priyanka Mittal, Chairperson, Foreign Trade & Investment Committee, PHD Chamber
2. Mr. G S Singhvi, Co-Chairman, Foreign Trade & Investment Committee, PHD Chamber
3. Mr. Sanjay Beswal, Co-Chairman, Foreign Trade & Investment Committee, PHD Chamber

Special Invitees-

4. Dr. V K Kaul, Head, Department of Business Economics, University of Delhi, South Campus
5. Dr. Gulshan Sachdeva, Professor, Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
6. Dr. S K Mohanty, Professor, Research & Information System (RIS)
7. Mr. Mahesh C.Verma, Director, IC Centre for Governance

Members-

8. Mr. Surinder K Kalra, Consultant, S.K.Kalra and Associates
9. Mr. Amitava Ray, Executive Director, Uflex Limited
10. Mr. S N Dua, Corporate Advisor, Industrial cables
11. Mr. Anay Gupta, Director, Vinko Auto Industries Limited
12. Mr. Ashok Maheshwari, Partner, Ashok Maheshwary & Associates
13. Mr. V P Verma, Tax & Corporate Advisor, V P Verma & Associates
14. Mr. V K Gupta, Director, Nirman
15. Mr. Rajesh Sehgal, Director, Lord Krishna Productions,

16. Mr. S Visweswaran, Director, Akilaja Computer Technology
17. Mr. Gagan Sinha, Director BD, Delton Cables
18. Ms. Shriya Gupta, BD, Delton Cables

Secretariat-

19. Dr S P Sharma, Chief Economist, PHD Chamber
20. Ms. Surbhi Sharma, Sr. Research Officer, PHD Chamber
21. Mr. Rohit Singh, Research Associate, PHD Chamber
22. Ms. Kriti Khurana, Research Associate, PHD Chamber

Warm regards,

Dr. S P Sharma
Chief Economist

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