

DGFT's COVID-19 Helpdesk resolving Trade related Issues

By TIOL News Service

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In view of the surge in COVID-19 cases, the 'Covid-19 Helpdesk' of Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) in the Department of Commerce has from 26.04.2021 onwards started collecting information on the difficulties being faced by exporting community so as to examine and resolve the irritants faced by the trade & industry expeditiously

Various issues relating to Department of Commerce/DGFT, Import and Export Licensing Issues, Customs clearance delays and complexities arising thereon, Import/Export documentation issues, Banking matters, Transport/Port Handling/Shipping/Air Movement issues and availability of manpower for running export units etc. are the key areas being examined by the Helpdesk. Trade related issues concerning other Ministries/Departments/Agencies of Central Government and State Governments are being collated and are being taken up for resolution with the concerned agencies.

Major areas which have been flagged through Helpdesk for support, include-

- Import of Oxygen Concentrators/Oximeters/Covid Related Medical Devices - Regulations & relaxations requested;
- Application Status of licenses incentives;
- Banking related Issues - Shipping Bills not reflecting in RBI EDPMS system.
- Customs Clearance issues
- Documentation issues
- Export Obligation extensions
- Transport/Port Handling/Shipping/Air Movement

Within a period of 15 days, 163 requests have been received seeking support, policy clarity and relaxations etc., out of which 78 have been fully resolved. Major issues which got coordinated/ resolved during the period, include:

On 6th May 2021, PESO relaxed the norms for registration of imports by way of simplifying online registrations without carrying out the physical inspection of production facilities of global manufacturers before granting registration and approvals for importing oxygen cylinders and cryogenic tankers/containers;

Issue of mandatory BIS and SIMS requirements for import of oxygen cylinders to India. This would reduce the compliance burden and will waive off the fees to be paid for SIMS registration;

DGFT took up with RBI issue regarding the Shipping bills not reflecting in the RBI-EDPMS system for the exporters to be able to get their data updated for availing benefits under the FTP;

DGFT took up the issue with DPIIT regarding the request of some industries for allocation of Oxygen supply for Industrial activities and the support requested for subsidies for establishing the Oxygen Manufacturing plant;

DGFT successfully addressed issue of lockdown in Karnataka impacting garment manufacturing industry.

Industry can approach the Covid 19 Helpdesk for support and register their issues on the DGFT website (<https://dgft.gov.in>) or email at dgftedi@nic.in. Department of Commerce is committed to take up all such matters received on priority with other Ministries/Departments and State Governments/UTs.