THE HINDU BusinessLine

Exim Bank plans portal to provide export facilitation services to SMEs

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In talks with banks for data on export finance, logistics firms for freight costs

Yaduvendra Mathur, CMD, Exim Bank

Mumbai, September 6:

To encourage small enterprises to export, the Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) plans to start a portal 'Exim Mitra'. It aims to facilitate 20-25 services, including registration for undertaking exports, information on the closest bank branch that will provide export credit, and indicative freight cost.

While big companies have a well-oiled infrastructure set-up to take care of their exports, small enterprises are at sixes and sevens when it comes to dealing with the procedures related to exports. Hence, Exim Bank proposes to start a portal to provide facilitation services for the latter.

Exim Bank Chairman and Managing Director Yaduvendra Mathur said: "We are looking to open an online facilitation window. We note there is a big information gap. There are a large number of potential exporters, typically smaller companies which are not able to access the whole gamut of facilities and there are many agencies involved (for exports)."

Many procedures

"Exporters have to get registration from the Director-General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) to export. Then they have to deal with customs procedures. They have to get finance. If they are in small cities, their banks may not know export procedures and may be unwilling to extend them packing credit."

So, 20-25 services, which typically an exporter would want to access, would be put online via the portal, said Mathur.

For example, if an exporter in Satara, Maharashtra needs export finance then he should be able to tap the 'Exim Mitra' portal and get information on the closest commercial bank branch that can help him with his financing requirement.

Mathur said "We are talking to all the banks. They are giving us their data (on branches dealing with export finance) so that we can upload the same on our portal....at least, those links and leads so that exporters can approach the nearest bank branch for loan."

Freight cost estimate

The Exim Bank is looking at putting up a structure so that an exporter can get an estimate of the freight cost of an export consignment from, say, Mumbai to Peru.

"We are talking to logistics companies also to give us macro figures like the per kilometer cost if an export consignment goes from Mumbai Port to Peru....This will help an Indian company/ manufacturer take a decision on whether to service a particular export market," said Mathur.

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