

Centre launches ₹4,531 cr mkt access support scheme

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New Delhi, 31 December

The government on Wednesday launched ₹4,531 crore market access support (MAS) intervention scheme for a six-year period (FY26-31) to improve global reach, visibility and competitiveness of Indian exporters through 'structured and outcome-oriented' interventions.

The scheme is aimed at benefiting first-time exporters, firms from priority sectors such as agriculture, leather, handloom, toys and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) exporters. The MAS was launched under ₹25,060 export promotion mission that was approved by the Union Cabinet in November.

The launch of the scheme came against the backdrop of exporters grappling with challenges due to the imposition of 50 per cent tariff by the United States (US) on several Indian products. Department of Commerce additional secretary and Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) Ajay Bhadoo told reporters that the scheme mainly aims to resolve the long-term disabilities or challenges faced by exporters and should not be seen as a measure to counter US tariffs.

During the current fiscal, ₹500 crore has been allocated towards the scheme. To begin with, arrears worth ₹330 crore will be cleared at the earliest.

Bhadoo also said that the scheme will have an MSME-bias as it not only focuses on export product and market diversification, but also on the diversification of beneficiaries, so that more

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exporters can benefit from the scheme.

The government has also planned over ₹5,000 crore interest equalisation scheme, which will be notified soon, Bhadoo said.

Under MAS, structured financial and institutional support will be provided for buyer-seller meets, participation in international trade fairs and exhibitions, mega reverse buyer-seller meets organised in India, and trade delegations to priority and emerging export markets. A forward-looking three-to-five-year calendar of major market access events will be prepared and approved in advance, enabling exporters and organising agencies to plan participation well ahead of time.

"A minimum participation of 35 per cent MSMEs has been mandated for supported events, with special prioritisation being accorded to new geographies and smaller markets to encourage export diversification. Event-level financial support ceilings and cost-sharing ratios have been rationalised, with preferential support being extended to priority sectors and markets. Small exporters with export turnover of up to ₹75 lakh in the preceding year will be provided partial airfare support to encourage participation by new and small exporters," the commerce department said.