India–UK CETA Opens New Export Opportunities for Indian Businesses

■ *By Sitaram Mewati*

The World Trade Center Mumbai and All India Association of Industries (AIAI) have welcomed the implementation of the India–United Kingdom Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Double Contribution Convention, describing it as a major milestone for India's global trade growth.

Under the agreement, the UK will eliminate or reduce tariffs on 98.8% of tariff lines, covering 99.5% of trade value. Nearly 99% of Indian exports will receive zero-duty access to the UK market, with bilateral trade expected to increase by 20% by 2029.

Dr. Vijay Kalantri, Chairman, World Trade Center Mumbai and President, All India Association of Industries, said the pact would provide a major boost to exports, manufacturing and employment, particularly benefiting MSMEs and labour-intensive sectors.

"The elimination of tariffs of up to 70% on processed food products, 21.5% on marine products, 18% on engineering goods and auto components, 16% on leather and footwear, 12% on textiles and clothing, and 8% on chemicals and pharmaceuticals will significantly improve the competitiveness of Indian exporters," Dr. Kalantri said.



Chef Birjesh Kumar, Executive Chef

He added that the agreement would create new opportunities for India's services sector across 137 sub-sectors, including IT, financial services, education, healthcare, engineering and professional services. The mobility provisions for professionals and opportunities for Indian chefs, yoga instructors and classical musicians will further strengthen people-to-people connections.

Dr. Kalantri highlighted that extending the Double Contribution Convention from three to five years would benefit over 75,000 Indian professionals by preventing dual social security contributions during temporary assignments in the UK.

He emphasised the need for sector-specific export strategies, support for MSMEs in meeting UK standards and stronger trade promotion measures to maximise the benefits of the agreement.

"Buyer-seller meets, trade missions, market intelligence support and export-finance facilities will be essential to convert market access into real trade and investment opportunities," he added.

WTC Mumbai and AIAI said the India–UK CETA will strengthen bilateral trade and investment, encourage innovation partnerships and help integrate Indian enterprises into global value chains, supporting India's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.