



UIBC

Abetting UAE-India Alliance

UIBC NEWSLETTER

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KEY HIGHLIGHTS

INDIA WORKING WITH UAE, SAUDI ARABIA TO ADD MOMENTUM TO IMEEC AMID CONFLICTS



Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, and New Delhi are working on the eastern end of the proposed India-Middle-East-Europe Economic Corridor even as the conflict in West Asia stymied its implementation.

“The IMEEC that was announced in September 2023 can be a game changer. The conflict underway currently in the Middle East has undoubtedly been a major complication,” External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar said in Rome, adding: “But the IMEEC is proceeding ahead on the Eastern side, especially between India, UAE, and Saudi Arabia.” The leaders of India, France, Germany, Italy, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the European Union, and the United States announced an MoU on September 9, 2023, on the sideline of the G20 summit in New Delhi, committing to work together to develop the IMEEC. [READ MORE](#)

UAE CONTINUES TO LEAD IN SHAPING GLOBAL ENERGY SECTOR, SAYS INDIA'S MINISTER OF PETROLEUM



Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, India's Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, emphasised the UAE's leadership in the global energy sector, describing it as one of the foremost producers of vital energy, which has made significant strides in the energy transition phase. On the sidelines of the 40th edition of the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference (ADIPEC 2024), Shri Puri said that the UAE is among the leading nations in green hydrogen production and in addressing critical minerals, noting that the

country boasts an exceptional energy mix. [READ MORE](#)

INDIA'S IMPORTS FROM UAE SURGE 70% IN OCTOBER TO USD7.2 BN : COMMERCE MINISTRY



India's imports from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), its free trade agreement (FTA) partner, soared by 70.37 per cent year-on-year in October to reach USD 7.2 billion, according to data released by the Commerce Ministry. This surge resulted in a trade deficit of approximately USD 3.5 billion for the month, compared to USD 2.47 billion in September.

Cumulatively, imports from the UAE between April and October rose by 55.12 per cent to USD 38.64 billion, up from USD 24.91 billion in the same period of the previous fiscal year. During the same timeframe, India's exports to the UAE grew by 15.86 per cent to USD 20.93 billion, compared to USD 18 billion a year earlier. This widened the trade deficit for the seven-month period to USD 17.71 billion, a significant increase from USD 6.85 billion in the corresponding period last year. The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between India and the UAE, which came into effect in May 2022, has played a pivotal role in boosting trade. Notably, India's imports from the UAE rose by 49.22 per cent in September and 72.7 per cent in August, while exports increased by 23.75 per cent and 3.16 per cent, respectively, during those months. [READ MORE](#)

A BILATERAL INVESTMENT TREATY WITH A 'BIT' OF CHANGE



The bilateral investment treaty (BIT) between India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) which was signed earlier this year was recently made public. This BIT, which will replace the 2014 India-UAE investment treaty, is critical. It reveals India's latest investment treaty practice and might elucidate India's ongoing negotiations with the United Kingdom and the European Union. A typical BIT should accomplish two objectives. First, it should balance the competing goals of investment protection and the state's sovereign right to regulate. Second, it should contain unambiguous provisions to reduce the discretion of investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) tribunals. [READ MORE](#)

LEADING GCC BANKS EMIRATES NBD AND MASHREQ BACK SYNDICATED LOANS PLATFORM - LOANBOOK



Emirates NBD and Mashreq Bank announced a strategic investment in NewBridge Fintech Solutions, a fintech firm and owner of LoanBook, an EMEA focused- next-generation platform digitising the syndicated loan and private credit markets.

LoanBook offers a centralised marketplace for market participants to access global loan opportunities and automates end-to-end workflows, bringing much-needed efficiency and velocity to an industry still heavily reliant on manual processes. With this investment, LoanBook gains significant resources, scale, and industry support to deliver transformative solutions to the loan capital markets.

As an industry-backed platform, LoanBook aims to fundamentally innovate the \$5.5 trillion annual loan issuance market across primary syndication, secondary trading, and lifecycle management workflows between borrower, lenders and administrative agents. LoanBook management and advisory board comprises senior ex bankers and industry leaders who believe that Loan markets are ready to embrace a digital future that will unlock greater liquidity, efficiency, and ultimately attract a wider investor base, through continuous innovation across the credit ecosystem. [READ MORE](#)

STATEMENTS FROM KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

Mr. Hitesh Asarpota, CEO of Emirates NBD Capital: "Our loan syndication and agency team will actively collaborate with LoanBook to effectively address the multiple friction points endemic to the current loan market structure. This aligns with our collaborative approach to innovation at Emirates NBD, and we are excited to be a part of LoanBook's efforts to help shape the future of the loan market ecosystem."

Mr. Chiradeep Deb, Global Head of Investment Banking, Mashreq: "Mashreq is pleased to be part of LoanBook's effort to bring digitisation to the loan markets. As part of our Neo ventures initiative, we will actively collaborate, co-create, and commercialise solutions across the larger EMEA markets to bring modernisation to the syndicated loans market."

BOROUGE ADVANCES AI INNOVATION AND SOLUTIONS WITH MBZUAI STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP



Borouge, a leading petrochemical company that provides innovative and differentiated polyolefin solutions, has partnered with the Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence (MBZUAI) to boost collaborative research, knowledge transfer and create student internship opportunities.

The agreement will contribute to the advancement of AI and digitalisation at Borouge. Fostering innovation and exploring AI solutions, the partnership will use research and product development to boost Borouge's support across industries such as energy, infrastructure, mobility, healthcare, electrification, advanced packaging, and agriculture. The partnership will also upskill the next generation of AI leaders, providing students with internship opportunities at Borouge to develop their skills and professional experiences while also offering workshops and seminars on current industry advancements. [READ MORE](#)

Hazem Sultan Al Suwaidi, CEO of Borouge, said: "AI is a powerful catalyst for accelerating Borouge's growth and transforming our operations. We are pleased to collaborate with Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence to support the next generation of AI leaders as they design solutions for the future of the petrochemical industry. We have already seen the power that AI can have in our business, driving efficiency and enhancing productivity to create value and through partnerships we are able to further contribute to a sustainable future."

MBZUAI Provost and University Professor Tim Baldwin, said: "Collaborating with industry to enhance innovation, productivity, and growth is a critical part of the mission of MBZUAI, across sectors ranging from transport to healthcare and energy. This exciting partnership with Borouge will enable us to bring AI-powered innovation to a whole new set of sectors, and provide our students, researchers, and faculty with invaluable market experience."

ABU DHABI OFFERS INDIAN STARTUPS A GATEWAY TO GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH ABU DHABI INVESTMENT OFFICE: ADIO'S MASSIMO FALCIONI



The Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO) serves as a central entity in fostering economic growth and diversification in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. ADIO's strategic emphasis on nurturing knowledge-based industries is the driving force behind Abu Dhabi's aspiration to become a leading global center for innovation and sustainability. The organisation's primary mandate is to create a sustainable and innovative investment environment that supports long-term success for businesses and investors. In an interaction with ET Online, Mr. Massimo Falcioni, Chief Competitiveness Officer at ADIO, states that Indian startups, known for their rapid growth and talent, present a promising partnership opportunity, further strengthened by India-UAE bilateral ties. He adds that ADIO seeks to build mutually beneficial relationships, enabling Indian businesses to thrive in Abu Dhabi's ecosystem while advancing innovation and economic development in both regions. [READ MORE](#)

CEPA's: BRIDGES TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIP

الاتفاقيات الاقتصادية الشاملة.. جسر للشركات المستدامة
CEPAs: Bridges toward Sustainable Partnership

CEPAs: Bridges toward Sustainable Partnerships

The UAE is distinguished by an attractive business environment, making it the top destination for foreign direct investment in the Arab world, and one of the world's most important financial centers due to its advanced financial, trade, and economic position.

During the next 50 years, the UAE aims to become the global capital for investment and economic innovation.

The volume of UAE's non-oil foreign trade 11.2%

Reaching AED 1.4 trillion in the first half of 2024

The set goal is to reach AED 3 trillion by the end of 2024

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Agreements with concluded negotiations

Australia Malaysia New Zealand Morocco Kenya Congo-Brazzaville Ukraine

Benefits of CEPAs

- Facilitating market access for service providers
- Streamlining custom procedures
- Access to global markets
- Reduction or elimination of tariffs
- Reinforcing competition based on fair trade principles
- Setting clear, flexible, and transparent regulations

The UAE undertook various steps to reinforce economic development

- Ratifying several CEPAs with strategic partners
- Developing international partnerships in trade, industry, investment, and services
- Signing additional agreements to diversify economic ties

Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements (CEPAs)

Agreements that have come into force

Indonesia Georgia India Israel Cambodia Türkiye

Signed Agreements

Mauritius Vietnam Colombia Costa Rica Serbia Jordan Chile South Korea

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THE RISING POWER OF INDIA'S E-COMMERCE EXPORTS

ARTICLE CONTRIBUTED BY SUPERSONIC INDIA PVT. LTD.



India's e-commerce export sector is witnessing a revolution, with a firm push from the government through its Districts as Export Hubs initiative, part of the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023-2028. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the potential for Indian businesses—especially MSMEs, local artisans, and small enterprises—to access international markets is immense. **This initiative is poised to strengthen trade between India and the UAE, bringing a broader range of high-quality products from various Indian districts to UAE consumers, ultimately enriching the UAE's import diversity and enhancing business relations.**

The government's vision of turning India's districts into global export hubs aims to decentralize export growth, address regional disparities, and provide much-needed support to local businesses. The focus is on fostering an ecosystem that empowers businesses through logistical enhancements, digital marketing support, and regulatory facilitation. With the UAE as a major trading partner, these improvements align seamlessly with the UAE's interest in expanding imports from India, enabling UAE-based businesses to source authentic products from India more efficiently and reliably. However, despite this ambitious plan, the sector faces a range of challenges, particularly in the realm of banking and finance.

KEY FEATURES OF THE DISTRICTS AS EXPORT HUBS INITIATIVE

The government's Districts as Export Hubs initiative plans to transform 50 districts initially, with the goal of eventually covering 200 districts. This phased approach allows the government to assess the initiative's impact before further expansion. The policy seeks to:

- Support MSMEs, local artisans, and businesses by enhancing infrastructure and access to global markets, thus providing UAE importers with a wider variety of unique Indian products.
- Provide logistical support, including warehousing and last-mile delivery services, aimed at cutting down costs and speeding up exports. Enhance access to digital marketplaces, facilitating seamless connections between Indian sellers and UAE buyers on platforms like Amazon and Flipkart Global, which already have established networks in the UAE.

- Regulatory and compliance support, helping businesses navigate customs, export regulations, and duty benefits under schemes like Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) and Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS). This support reduces export complexities, making it easier for Indian businesses to maintain compliance with UAE import standards, thus simplifying trade relations between both countries.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR E-COMMERCE EXPORTS

Despite the promising scope of e-commerce exports, businesses face notable challenges in scaling their operations internationally. Some of the most pressing hurdles include:

1. Banking and Financial Challenges

The banking system plays a critical role in facilitating e-commerce exports, especially in managing payments and foreign exchange (forex) transactions. However, exporters face several banking-related issues:

- **Payment Delays and High Transaction Costs:** Many businesses struggle with delays in receiving payments due to inefficient banking procedures, especially when dealing with international clients. Additionally, high transaction fees charged by banks for currency conversion and wire transfers eat into profit margins.
- **Complex Forex Management:** For small businesses, navigating forex risks and currency fluctuations can be overwhelming. Without proper tools, exporters can lose significant revenue when exchange rates move against them.
- **Limited Access to Working Capital:** Many MSMEs face difficulty accessing adequate working capital, limiting their ability to fulfil larger international orders. Banks often require extensive documentation, leading to delays in disbursing credit.

2. Logistical Barriers

- **High Shipping Costs:** Shipping products internationally remains costly, especially for MSMEs, which do not have economies of scale. However, enhanced logistical support in India's export hubs is expected to reduce costs, benefiting UAE-based importers by making Indian products more affordable and accessible.
- **Warehousing and Infrastructure Issues:** Many exporters face infrastructure challenges such as lack of warehousing space in export hubs, increasing turnaround times for products. With improved infrastructure, goods flow between India and the UAE can become faster and more reliable, enhancing overall trade efficiency.

3. Regulatory Hurdles

- **Customs Clearance Delays:** Indian exporters often experience long delays in customs clearances, both domestically and internationally, which affects timely deliveries. The government's support for smoother regulatory processes will directly impact the speed of shipments to UAE markets, ensuring that goods arrive on time.
- **Complex Compliance with International Standards:** Exporters often struggle with varying standards across countries. The Districts as Export Hubs initiative includes compliance training, making it easier for Indian exporters to meet UAE's import regulations, ultimately fostering stronger business ties.

BANKING SOLUTIONS FOR E-COMMERCE EXPORTERS

Addressing banking challenges is critical for the success of India's e-commerce exporters. Here are some strategic solutions:

1. **Collaboration with Fintech Companies:** Exporters can leverage the services of fintech platforms that offer international payment solutions with lower transaction fees, faster processing times, and simplified forex management tools.
2. **Government-backed Financial Initiatives:** The government could introduce initiatives that ease access to working capital for MSMEs, offering lower interest rates, minimal paperwork, and quicker approvals. This

will benefit UAE importers by providing them access to Indian businesses with more financial stability and greater capacity for international trade.

3. **Expanding Forex Management Tools:** Exporters should consider tools that offer real-time forex rate tracking and hedging solutions to minimize currency fluctuation risks.
4. **Strengthening Payment Gateways:** Payment gateways that integrate with international buyers' preferred payment methods can significantly reduce payment delays. Such measures increase trust for UAE buyers when dealing with Indian exporters, leading to smoother and more secure trade transactions.



STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXPORT SUCCESS

To maximize the potential of e-commerce exports and overcome banking and logistical challenges, businesses can follow these recommendations:

1. **Invest in Logistics Partnerships:** Partner with logistics companies that specialize in international shipping and offer warehousing solutions to speed up the export process. This can also help in optimizing shipping costs through bulk arrangements, making products more competitive in the UAE market.
2. **Optimize Digital Marketing:** With growing competition on international marketplaces, Indian exporters must focus on SEO, social media marketing, and region-specific promotional campaigns. This increases brand visibility in global markets, leading to higher sales. Such visibility on UAE-based digital platforms will attract more UAE buyers to Indian goods, enhancing the overall trading relationship.
3. **Take Advantage of Export Schemes:** Exporters should stay updated on government incentives and duty exemption schemes such as EPCG and MEIS, which can improve profitability by reducing export-related costs. Savings from these schemes can be passed down to UAE customers, making Indian products more attractive and affordable.
4. **Enhance Compliance Training:** E-commerce hubs can provide essential training on international compliance standards, enabling exporters to quickly navigate regulatory complexities. This ensures that Indian businesses remain compliant with UAE import regulations, enhancing trust and streamlining trade with UAE clients.

THE ROAD AHEAD

The Districts as Export Hubs initiative presents a monumental opportunity for Indian businesses to scale their operations and reach international markets. With a reliable infrastructure, streamlined processes, and improved trade compliance, this initiative is set to strengthen trade relations with key partners like the UAE, offering UAE importers a richer, more reliable supply of Indian products.

UIBC ACTIVITIES



2 December 2024, Jaipur (L to R): Col. Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, Hon'ble Minister of Industry & Commerce, Government of Rajasthan; Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Sharafuddin Sharaf, Chairman, UIBC; Vice Chairman, Sharaf Group; Capt. Ashwani Nayar, Deputy CEO, Hind Terminals Pvt Ltd, India



3 December 2024 (L to R): Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Sharafuddin Sharaf, Chairman, UIBC; Vice Chairman, Sharaf Group; Shri Manohar Lal Khattar, Hon'ble Minister of Power and Housing & Urban Affairs, Government of India

UPCOMING EVENTS



UIBC

Abetting UAE-India Alliance

SUPPORTING PARTNER



Ras Al-Khaimah Investment & Trade Summit

A Global Exhibition & Conference
Propelling **Ras Al Khaimah** as an
Ideal Investment Destination

10 - 11 December, 2024

RAK Exhibition Center, Ras al-Khaimah, UAE





09 - 11 December 2024
Jaipur
Rajasthan
INDIA

automechanika
DUBAI

10 - 12 December 2024
Dubai World Trade Centre
Dubai
UAE

**Bharat
Mobility**
GLOBAL EXPO 2025
Beyond Boundaries: Co-creating
Future Automotive Value Chain

17 - 22 January 2025
- Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi
- Yashobhoomi, New Delhi
- India Expo Centre & Mart,
Greater Noida
INDIA



28 - 29 January 2025
Bhubaneswar
Odisha
INDIA



UIBC

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UAE-India Business Council (UIBC) is the only Official Joint Business Chamber set up by both the Governments for promoting economic synergy between the UAE and India. UIBC was formally launched by His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE Minister for Foreign Affairs and Late Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Hon'ble Minister of External Affairs of India during 11th Session of the India-UAE Joint Commission Meeting on 03 September 2015 in New Delhi.

UIBC aims to create an inclusive bilateral trade environment between UAE and India by linking businesses from both the countries and supporting long term commercial partnerships for developing strategic relationships between businesses and government officials from both the countries.

UIBC acts towards promoting investment promotion and business collaborations / JVs between UAE and Indian businesses by organizing B2B networking meetings, policy forums and investment focused events, delegations, and other facilities required to succeed. It serves to provide a voice and visibility to the various stakeholders in UAE-India economic space and work towards promoting trade and investment, job creation, innovation, inclusion, and entrepreneurship between the UAE and India.

UAE-India Business Council (UIBC)

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OUR MISSION

- ❖ To act as a catalyst engaged in exchange of ideas intended to promote the economic synergy between the UAE and India
- ❖ To serve as the direct link between business and government leaders of both the countries
- ❖ To work towards providing the critical first 'home-away-from-home' with a network of Government, Policy Makers, Business Leaders, and Industry contacts supported by highly skilled secretariat
- ❖ Providing a voice and visibility to the various stakeholders in UAE-India economic space
- ❖ To work towards promoting trade and investment, job creation, innovation, inclusion, and entrepreneurship between the UAE and India



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