

Ministry of Commerce & Industry
Department of Commerce
Economic Division

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Udyog Bhawan, New Delhi
9th March, 2007

Subject: Constitution of an Expert Committee to improve the quality of external trade data

It has been noticed in recent years that the first reported provisional data on external trade is under reported and subject to substantial subsequent revisions making it difficult to compute stable and unbiased growth rates of exports and imports in the current period.

2. In view of the above, it has been decided to constitute an Expert Committee to examine and give recommendations on the following:

- i) The extent of under-reporting of provisional trade data compared with the final data and the reasons thereof.
- ii) The best international practices of estimating trade data including estimation of the seasonality factor.
- iii) Measures that should be implemented to:
 - a) Reduce the time lag of reporting
 - b) Minimise the margin of error in compilation and classification of data
 - c) Improve the method of data collection
- iv) A new methodology for collection, estimation and reporting of trade data that will appropriately address the deficiencies in the current system
- v) Any other issues of relevance to the above.

3. The Expert Committee will consist of the following:

1. DG, CSO – Chairperson
2. Senior Economic Advisor, Deptt. of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance - Member
3. Divisional head of the Statistical wing of the RBI - Member
4. DG (System), Customs – Member
5. Economic Advisor, DOC - Member
6. Representative from DGFT – Member
7. DG, DGCI&S - Member
8. Additional Economic Advisor, DOC - Member Secretary.

4. The Committee will give its recommendations within three months of its constitution.

5. This issues with the approval of competent authority.