



NEWSLETTER

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Govt. affirms stronger support to boost apparel industry

- Industry and Entrepreneurship Development Minister Sunil Handunnetthi pledges support for innovation, technical assistance, regulatory improvements
- Highlights reactivation of EDCM to address industry challenges
- Says Govt. prioritizes Eravur Fabric Park to ease raw material supply chain constraints
- Commends apparel industry's leadership in ethical and sustainable manufacturing
- Calls for Govt.-industry collaboration for long-term success

The Government this week reassured its commitment to taking all necessary steps to ensure the apparel industry remains a formidable player on the global stage.

Speaking at the 42nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Sri Lanka Apparel Exporters Association (SLAEA) on Monday, Industry and Entrepreneurship Development Minister Sunil Handunneththi pledged stronger support for innovation, technical assistance and regulatory improvements to help manufacturers compete in the global market.

“The Government remains committed to supporting the industry through technological advancements, supply chain and policy improvements to boost global competitiveness,” he added.

Handunneththi underscored the industry’s potential for a major transformation, positioning it as a cornerstone of the economic recovery.

Noting that President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on Monday (27) reactivated the long-dormant Export Development Council (EDCM) after four-year hibernation, he said some key decisions were taken at the meeting.

A stand out decision was the installation of an automated scanning system at the Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA) in Katunayake, funded by the Industries Ministry, replacing the outdated manual processes. This helps to address delays in export inspections. Issues related to the inspection of apparel exports were highlighted, and resolutions were formulated with the consensus of all stakeholders,” he explained.

Handunneththi said this initiative, which received Presidential backing, marks a significant step towards removing bureaucratic hurdles that have long plagued exporters including apparel manufacturers.

He also addressed the challenges posed by global market competition and supply chain disruptions, particularly in sourcing raw materials. The Minister assured that the Government is expediting the development of the Eravur Fabric Park to ease supply chain constraints that the apparel industry is facing.

The Minister emphasised that the apparel sector is more than just an economic driver and it is a global leader in ethical manufacturing.

Recalling that Sri Lankan apparel manufacturers were the first in the world to promote ethical labour practices and environmentally friendly garment production, championing the ‘garments without guilt’ campaign; he commended the industry for its leadership.

As we progress, the industry must not only focus on improving final products but also revolutionise production processes, ensure alignment with international best practices and sustainability standards,” he noted.

Handunneththi stressed that as the sector navigates an increasingly competitive landscape, strategic reforms and enhanced Government-industry collaboration could pave the way for sustainable and long term success

Source: Daily FT





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President calls on exporters to seize new opportunities to lead economy



President Anura Kumara Dissanayake

- **In address at 26th Presidential Export Awards, reaffirms Govt.'s support for export sector**
- **Awards recognise 14 major winners and 51 companies**
- **Stresses importance of trust between SL and international economic stakeholders**
- **Advocates strategic trade agreements that align with national interests than aggressive trade policies**
- **Acknowledges country's weak market position, need for external support**
- **Highlights Govt. initiatives to provide technical assistance, improve product quality**
- **Emphasises renewable energy investments, lower electricity tariffs to boost competitiveness**

President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on Friday urged exporters to seize new opportunities and drive economic recovery, stating the need for strategic engagement in global markets.

Addressing the 26th Presidential Export Awards at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH) last Friday, he reaffirmed the Government's commitment to supporting exporters as they rebuild the economic future.

The Presidential Export Awards, initiated in 1981 by the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (EDB), recognise exporters who make significant contributions to the economy. The latest edition honoured 14 major award winners and 51 companies across the production and service sectors, with recipients gaining the right to use the Presidential Export Award logo for three years as a global marketing tool.



Dissanayake reiterated his commitment to fostering an export-driven economic recovery, asserting the importance of trust between Sri Lanka and international economic stakeholders. He assured exporters that their concerns would be addressed and invited them to work alongside the Government to strengthen the economy.

“The Government’s role is to facilitate the conditions for success, but it is the exporters who must take the lead in rebuilding the country’s economic future,” he said.

Dissanayake also underscored the interconnected nature of the global economy, insisting that Sri Lanka must compete strategically for market share rather than adopting aggressive or reckless trade policies.

He called for well-structured trade agreements that align with Sri Lanka’s national interests, cautioning against hasty decisions that could have long-term economic consequences.

The President acknowledged the country’s weak market position, noting that external support was necessary to regain lost ground.

He stressed that economic stabilisation efforts had created a foundation for recovery and the Government was prepared to assist exporters in leveraging these for long-term growth.

Recognising the pressures faced by exporters, the President highlighted initiatives to provide technical assistance and support for high-quality product development.

He also outlined the Government’s focus on renewable energy, stating that lower electricity costs would contribute to the long-term competitiveness of Sri Lankan industries.

The awards ceremony was attended by several distinguished individuals, including Industry and Entrepreneurship Development Minister Sunil Handunnetthi, Labour Minister and Economic Development Deputy Minister Prof. Anil Jayantha Fernando, Energy Minister Kumara Jayakody, Industry and Entrepreneurship Development Deputy Minister Chathuranga Abeysinghe, Industry and Entrepreneurship Development Ministry Secretary Thilaka Jayasundara, EDB Chairman Mangala Wijesinghe, Senior Adviser to the President Duminda Hulangamuwa, along with exporters, other Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Parliamentarians, foreign diplomats, Ministry Secretaries, and officials of the EDB.





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EXPORT OF APPAREL STATISTICS

Export of Apparel for the Month of January 2020 - 2025

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2024/2025
	US\$. Mn	US\$. Mn	US\$. Mn	US\$. Mn	US\$. Mn	US\$. Mn	Change %
Total Exports	445.73	397.61	487.60	396.63	357.73	437.07	22.18
US	196.48	164.80	214.46	162.22	133.21	169.75	27.43
EU	120.76	128.47	139.26	113.10	102.47	129.49	26.37
UK	65.95	43.31	61.47	56.34	52.45	61.57	17.39
Other	62.54	61.03	72.41	64.97	69.60	76.26	9.57

Export of Apparel in the Month of January 2020 - 2025 to All Countries

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	US\$. Mn	US\$. Mn	US\$. Mn	US\$. Mn	US\$. Mn	US\$. Mn
Chapter 61	234.64	237.64	288.56	228.95	195.76	252.06
Chapter 62	201.36	147.80	190.36	159.96	153.32	176.31
Chapter 63	9.71	12.17	8.68	7.72	8.65	8.69
Total	445.71	397.61	487.60	396.63	357.73	437.06



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