



DR. M.J. KHAN

ICFA and CEPA sign Trade Promotion MoU

Republic of Korea (RoK) has emerged as a significant trade partner for India. The trade and economic relations between India and Republic of Korea (Korea) have gathered momentum in recent years. Bilateral trade in Jan-Dec 2020, recorded \$16.9 billion. The bilateral cooperation between the two countries cover a range of sectors, including energy, electronics, shipbuilding, information technology, cybersecurity, etc.

With Korea and India signing Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement in 2009, the two countries have committed to lowering or eliminating import tariffs on a wide range of goods over the next 8 years, and expand opportunities for investments and trade in goods as well as services.

This is a green signal for India for extending its trade interests in agriculture. Although there is a cautious approach in Korea regarding import of agriculture goods, India can seek the country's expertise in infrastructure and logistics in agriculture and allied sectors. India can thus look forward to investments and cooperation in food and agriculture sector from the companies and industries there in the presence of a facilitator.

Indian Chamber of Food and Agriculture (ICFA) and Korean Government Agency 'Chungcheongnam-do Economic Promotion Agency (CEPA)' signed a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) recently to facilitate trade and investment in food, agro and infrastructure sectors between Korea and India. The MoU was signed at ICFA HO in New Delhi by Dr. NK Dadlani, Advisor, ICFA and Mr. Seung Chang Ha, India Representative, CEPA.

Under the agreement the two sides have confirmed support in promoting cooperation in the areas of commercial, industrial and technical exchanges between the companies and industries from the respective regions for potential collaborations, partnerships, trade, investment and contract manufacturing in food and agriculture sector, including logistics and infrastructure.

ICFA, the apex body in India, working on business, policy and development agenda and serving as global platform for trade facilitation, partnerships, technology and agribusiness services, can be a convenient facilitator in the trade partnership. With its 27 industry Working Groups and sector specific Business Councils, ICFA representing the interests of key stakeholders at the national and international level, is in a position to utilise its rich gamut of experience in fostering partnerships and collaborations effectively. CEPA, the Korean counterpart, also works with similar objectives. Opening up the Indian market for small and medium-sized enterprises in Korea, CEPA provides corporate promotion support. It is an interesting development for both the countries. The two Asian giants' cooperation in agri sector will be beneficial to the respective countries.

