

CIABC urges state govts to withdraw all concessions to imported brands

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

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The Confederation of Indian Alcoholic Beverage Companies (CIABC) today said the historic FTA between India and the UK will further strengthen economic ties between the two nations across many sectors and lead to increased bilateral trade and investment. The one exception is the Indian alcoholic beverage sector, which has been seeking a level playing field throughout the negotiations.

According to Mr Anant S Iyer, Director General, CIABC: "Alcoholic beverages were a key component of the FTA talks. Though we are yet to receive the full details of the FTA, we hope that the Government has ensured that the interests of the Indian Alcobev industry are safeguarded. The industry is showing healthy growth and is a major contributor to state



exchequers." Iyer said with the import duty being cut drastically, it is high time that a number of state Governments end all concessions—such as lower brand registration fees, reduced excise duties, etc. — currently extended to BIO brands.

This has created a situation where importing Alcobev products is becoming cheaper than producing it in India.

With lower import duties, it will now become even more economical for MNC's to import their products. State Governments should end all discrimination against India-made alcoholic beverages.

Such concessions also go against the spirit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's mission of 'vocal for local'.

All countries protect and promote their domestic

products.

Why should some of our Governments promote imported products at the expense of Indian-made products?

The UK and the EU do not allow imports of most Indian IMFL products into their markets, citing non-tariff barriers related to maturation and ingredients. We only wish that the Government of India had stood firm on the issue of non-tariff barriers.

The Government has set an ambitious target of achieving \$1 billion in exports from the Indian Alcobev industry by 2030. However, without ensuring proper market access, it will be difficult to meet this target.

Though Indian whiskies, rum, gins, wines, etc., have been winning accolades globally, the lack of removal of non-tariff barriers and absence of reciprocal market access will make this export target hard to achieve, he said.