A NOTE ON STATISTICAL DATA

The chief source for the statistics of India’s exports and imports was the “Monthly Statistics of the Foreign Trade of India” published by the Director General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI & S) Calcutta. Data relating to the exports, imports, trade balance and Balance of payments (BoP) was also obtained from the several back numbers of the annual reports of the Ministry of Commerce (MoC) and Economic survey, Government of India. The data relating to exports, imports, annual average growth rates (Compound growth rates) and BoP of select regions of the world was obtained from “Handbook of International Trade and Development statistics (Annual, published by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) of several back numbers.

The present study required the relevant data on the Export Processing Zones in the world as well as in India from the various sources such as “International Directory on FTZs / EPZs” published by the Flagstaff Institute, World EPZs Association, USA, publications of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, the relevant documents of the MoC, Government of India, EPZ section attached to the MoC, and the records of the Offices of the Development Commissioners in each and every EPZ in India.

The convention to a period of time followed in this study is explained hereunder:

1. Calendar year is referred to by just one number e.g. 1965,
2. Indian fiscal year is given in hyphenated form e.g. 1985-86, which means the year starting on 1st April 1985 and ending by 31st March 1986 and
3. A period of fiscal years is referred to as e.g. 1985-86 – 1994-95, which means the period of ten fiscal years starting from 1985-86 and ending with 1994-95.

Growth rates are adjusted to the nearest integers. Percentage shares to the totals are presented in brackets / parentheses. They are also adjusted to the nearest integers in the running matter.

CONSTRAINTS RELATING TO DATA

During his field-trip, the researcher could not get accessibility to the records of the Customs Wing of the Indian EPZs, on the grounds of confidentiality. As a consequence, the exact amount of duty exempted on the imports into the EPZs in India could not be ascertained.
In spite of sincere attempt, the accessibility to many of the units could not be obtained. A few units which granted accessibility, could not furnish the full details about their activities. Hence, unit-wise exports, imports, and NFE earnings could not be obtained and presented. In the light of this situation, the researcher consulted the respective EPZs Industries Association and the records of the Office of the DCs. The exports, imports, and NFE earnings of each EPZ as a whole could only be presented.

Ministry of Commerce and EPZ section attached to the MoC supplied the data on EPZs in India, which was, to a greater extent, not wholesome.

Some times, some of the figures supplied by EPZ section, and MoC slightly varied from the figures supplied by the Office of the DCs. Under such circumstances, to avoid any complications on data, only one authenticated source i.e., the relevant records of the Office of the DCs were consulted.

Certain data sheets on agenda, minutes of the meetings of the Board of Approvals and other relevant matters governing Indian EPZs also could not be obtained on the grounds of confidentiality.

Current data up to 1995 on exports, imports, NFE earnings, investment, and employment generation by the EPZs of Sri Lanka, Singapore, Malaysia, Mauritius, Hongkong, Indonesia, UAE, Egypt could not be obtained, in spite of contacting the embassies of these countries in India. Even WEPZA International Directory on EPZs, one of the chief sources of the EPZs in the world—contained split data, but not the wholesome data on EPZs all over the world.

The final feedback was received in April 1996 in relation to the number of domestic units, foreign collaboration units, and the investment in the Indian EPZs. These figures are presented in the study for analysis. The latest data for 1995-96 and 1996-97 has been asked for and is yet to come from the relevant sources.