

India allows sugar, rice and onion exports to Maldives

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Shipments allowed under bilateral agreement between both nations

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India on Friday allowed the export of essential items such as eggs, potatoes, onions, rice, wheat flour (atta and maida), sugar, dal (processed pulses), stone aggregate and river sand to Maldives, prescribing a quantitative limit for each item during the 2024-25 fiscal under the bilateral trade agreement between both the countries. Currently, India has either banned or allowed export through permits for rice, wheat flour, onion, pulses and sugar to any country.

While the number of exportable eggs has been capped at 42,75,36,904, the Government has capped potatoes export at 21,513.08 tonnes, onions at 35,749.13 tonnes, rice at 1,24,218.36 tonnes, wheat flour at 109,162.96 tonnes, sugar at 64,494.33 tonnes and dal at 224.48 tonnes.

In the case of stone aggregate and river sand, the Government has decided to allow 10 lakh tonnes, each this fiscal. "Export of the listed items to the Republic of Maldives shall be exempted from any existing or future restriction/prohibition during 2024-25," the commerce ministry said in a notification.

Subject to environment, State clearance

For the export of River Sand and Stone Aggregate, CAPEXIL shall ensure that the suppliers and extractors have obtained appropriate clearances and mining of the sand is not undertaken in the Coastal Regulation Zone Area, which is prohibited under the Coastal Regulation Zone notification.

Besides, the Ministry also said export of river sand and stone aggregate will be allowed subject to the exporter obtaining necessary environmental clearances/No Objection Certificate from the designated nodal authority of respective State governments from where the River Sand is obtained. "This permission will also be subject to any State legislation/judicial orders relating to mining of 'River Sand' and 'Stone Aggregate'," it said.

Meanwhile, owing to Chinese influence, Maldives has asked India to take back its military troops stationed at its second aviation platform within this month, with the deadline for overall complete withdrawal fixed at May 15. A first batch of military personnel have already returned even though India has been trying to negotiate given Maldives' strategic maritime importance.