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Agricultural cargo from LBSI Airport grows 420%

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Varanasi: The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is looking forward to the expansion of the Lal Bahadur Shastri International airport here, at the earliest. APEDA deputy general manager C B Singh said, “Movement of perishable cargo is increasing by the day from this airport. Varanasi airport handled 561 metric ton of perishable cargo during 2022-23 financial year. Exports of fresh fruits, vegetables and cereals from east UP recorded a growth of 420% in 2022-23. In the first quarter of the current financial year (April-June), the Varanasi airport handled 160MT of agri cargo as compared to 46MT during the first quarter of 2022-23. It is 248 % higher than previous year’s first quarter.”

The cargo space of Varanasi-Sharjah goes full to capacity everyday, he said, adding, this flight gives direct connectivity to the Gulf market, while for London and other international markets the Farmer Producers Organisations (FPO) and exporters from east UP region are bound to opt for trans-shipment in which domestic flights take freight to Delhi or Mumbai for further transportation.

“Currently, very few airlines have trans-shipment bond for international cargo, including Indigo and Air India Express, while Air India, Vistara etc have not applied for trans-shipment bond,”he said, adding that to maintain this momentum of agri export from east UP region not only more trans-shipment bonds with more airlines but also increased frequency of international flights and operation of cargo flights are required.