

initiative

India eyes Russian market for leather revival

UP State Bureau
KANPUR

India's leather industry is preparing to reopen major trade ties with Russia after a gap of nearly four decades. Exporters from Uttar Pradesh, particularly Kanpur, say the recent 50 per cent tariff imposed by the United States on Indian goods has severely impacted their business. In 2024-25, the total exports from Uttar Pradesh stood at ₹1.86 lakh crore, of which 19 per cent depended on the US market. The tariff disruption has pushed exporters to look for alternative destinations,



and Russia has now shown strong interest.

In response, a 22-member delegation from the Council for Leather Exports (CLE) will visit Russia between December 8 and 10. According to CLE's regional chairman Asad Iraqi, the visit will focus on launching

CLE's 22-member delegation to visit Russia from December 8-10 for joint venture discussions

a joint venture programme with Russian partners. This initiative is expected to provide Indian manufacturers with an opportunity to operate directly in the Russian market.

Kanpur and other UP cities once supplied large volumes of leather to Russia. Although

shipments declined over the past several years, exporters believe that trade can now regain momentum. Meetings between Indian exporters and Russian buyers are also scheduled in Delhi ahead of the official visit, where market expansion and supply chains will be discussed. Officials from the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) noted that Kanpur manufactures over 30 quality products for export. Leather remains the city's flagship commodity, with strong demand previously recorded in countries such as the US, Brazil, Germany, Australia, Italy and

Poland. Kanpur's total export value is around ₹10,000 crore annually, with leather products accounting for ₹6,000-6,500 crore.

FIEO's assessment shows that bilateral trade between India and Russia reached 68.7 billion USD in 2024-25. Exporters expect that tapping into this market will help stabilise and expand the leather sector, which has faced significant setbacks in recent months. CLE Chairman R. K. Jalan stated that the roadmap with Russia is now clear, and leading exporters from across India will participate in the December visit.