

# India's increased export prowess on display with record shipments

**BANIKINKAR PATTANAYAK**  
New Delhi, May 22

**MERCHANDISE EXPORTS TO** seven of the top 10 markets trailed the official targets in FY22 but India still managed to not just beat its ambitious goal of \$400 billion but achieved record outbound shipments of \$422 billion last fiscal, as despatches to many other economies more than made up for the shortfall.

It reflects deeper market penetration by Indian exporters and suggests the country's long-attempted diversification strategy has started to pay off.

Data sourced from the DGCIS on the top 40 markets suggest exports to the UAE, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, UK, Germany and Nepal were in the range of 79% to 99% of the respective targets for FY22 (see chart). Exports to Malaysia and Russia faltered more dramatically, having hit just 77.6% and 78.5%, respectively, of the full-year targets.

Of course, exports to all these markets still surpassed the FY21 level when the pandemic had caused massive disruptions to

for them.

Importantly, India's exports to China remained flat at \$21.2 billion but imports from the neighbour jumped 44.4% to \$94.2 billion, leading to a record trade deficit of \$73 billion, or about 63% of the bilateral trade. This brings to fore the urgency of addressing massive inflows of low-grade products from Beijing at cheaper rates, a senior industry executive said. In an unusual move, the commerce ministry last year fixed export targets for each of the top 40 markets, instead of zeroing in on just a few economies or setting only a full-year goal. The ministry then followed it up with regular meetings with stakeholders and overseas missions for targeted interventions, following directions from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to enable exporters to better cash in on a global industrial resurgence.

"If we could cross a lofty target in FY22 despite lower-than-expected growth in seven of the top ten markets, it just suggests that once we further consolidate our position in these traditionally large markets, we can