

India signs protocol for export of chilli meal to China; discusses market access for farm products

OUR BUREAU

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India and China on Thursday signed a protocol for the export of Indian chilli meal to China. This is the fourth protocol signed between the two nations over the past year allowing the export of farm commodities from India.

Commerce Secretary Anup Wadhawan and General Administration of Customs of China (GACC) Vice-Minister Li Guo, who signed the protocol at a meeting here, also discussed issues related to India's pending request for the clearance of more farm products for the Chinese market, said an official release.

India raised the issues over market access for items such as bovine meat and soyabean meal, an official told *Business-Line*. "New Delhi argued that the de-boned and de-glanded



China wants India to expedite approval for the import of its apples and pears as well as dairy products GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

meat being supplied by India to developed markets was not affected by foot-and-mouth disease and should not be rejected by China on those grounds," the official said.

China said it would look into the matter, as it wanted exports to be approved by the global standards agency OIE.

India also pointed out that a large number of agricultural items for exports were awaiting China's nod, includ-

ing soyabean meal, pomegranate, okra, sapota, banana, papaya, pineapple, maize and sorghum. The draft protocol for okra is ready and is expected to be finalised soon for soyabean meal, the official said.

Earlier agreements

The protocols for export, signed since June 2018, include those for basmati and non-basmati rice, fish meal

and oil and tobacco leaves.

The Indian delegation expressed disappointment over the country not being able to export raw sugar to China — despite Beijing agreeing to it — as the sugar quota release time was not suitable for Indian farmers. The fact that Beijing sourced processed sugar from Pakistan rather than from India was also brought to Li's attention.

China, on its part, wanted India to expedite approval for the import of its apples and pears. It also wanted India to allow the import of dairy products including chocolates and candies.

"Both sides appreciated each other's concerns and agreed to resolve market access issues expeditiously in order to achieve a more balanced trade," the official release stated.