

India Unlocks Duty-Free Access to New Zealand Fashion Market

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India has effectively unlocked New Zealand's fashion market for its textile and apparel exporters following the conclusion of a landmark **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** between the two countries. Under this deal, Indian garments and related products will soon enter the New Zealand market **without customs duties**, dramatically improving cost competitiveness against rivals.

The agreement is part of a broader strategy to deepen economic ties and diversify trade partnerships between New Delhi and Wellington — a major step for Indian manufacturers seeking growth in new global destinations.

Zero Tariffs to Reshape Sourcing Mathematics

Previously, New Zealand levied tariffs — sometimes up to around 10% — on imported apparel including cotton tees, shirts and babywear. With the implementation of the FTA, these levies will be eliminated, effectively making Indian products **price-competitive with those from Bangladesh and China**, two of the dominant suppliers in the region.

Industry analysts point out that even modest shifts in buyer preference, propelled by duty-free pricing, could lead to **steady export gains over time** for Indian makers across the Pacific.

Textiles and Apparel Positioned for Growth

India's textile and clothing industry, one of the country's largest export sectors, is expected to benefit substantially from these new trading conditions. Earlier data showed Indian apparel exports to New Zealand already rising, but tariff elimination is projected to accelerate this trend further.

According to trade experts, the FTA could unlock opportunities within a New Zealand market that imports roughly US \$1.9 billion worth of textiles and apparel annually — a sizeable venue for Indian dry-goods producers to expand their footprint.

Strategic Trade Diversification for India

The broader agreement between India and New Zealand not only offers duty-free access for Indian fashion goods but also reflects a **national bid to diversify export markets** beyond traditional partners. Industry bodies say this could help reduce over-reliance on a narrow set of destinations and enhance India's role in global value chains.

Trade associations have welcomed the pact, noting that zero-duty access will support India's goals of scaling up textile and apparel exports and advancing its target of reaching US \$100 billion in combined sector shipments by 2030.

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