Feb - May 2026

INDIAN STONE

A journal from the Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry

STONE TRADITION MEETS TECHNOLOGY

Understanding the science and economics of stone temple construction & architectural design

News, articles & musings on

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Indian Stone

An in-house journal of FIGSI.
Feb - May 2026

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FROM FIGSI'S CHAMBERS

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Friends,

As we move further into this important chapter for FIGSI and the Indian natural stone industry, I am reminded of a simple truth: strong industries are not just built only in boardrooms or trade fairs, but in the collective confidence of their people. Every quarry, every processing unit, every entrepreneur, every worker, every exporter, and every young professional adds a layer to the foundation we are building together.

Over the past few months, FIGSI has taken meaningful steps in strengthening both the global voice and grassroots reach of our industry. From participating in leading international stone exhibitions across global markets to engaging with buyers, architects, machinery leaders, and trade stakeholders worldwide, FIGSI has continued to position Indian natural stone with pride and confidence on the global stage.

These platforms are not only about business opportunities; they are about reminding the world that India remains one of the most diverse, resilient, and future-ready stone industries globally.

At the same time, some of the most meaningful moments have come closer to home. The recent felicitation by the Dudu Industrial Federation was a reflection of FIGSI's growing connection with grassroots industry clusters and emerging stone regions. It reaffirmed our belief that the future of the industry lies in deeper outreach, stronger regional engagement, and listening to voices from every corner of the ecosystem. FIGSI must not only represent the industry nationally; it must remain accessible locally.

Over the last quarter, FIGSI has also remained continuously engaged with the Government of India on several critical policy matters affecting exporters and MSMEs. Through multiple representations and discussions, we raised key concerns regarding RoDTEP support, interest subvention, logistics-related pressures, export competitiveness, and operational challenges faced by the industry during a volatile global environment.

I firmly believe that constructive policy engagement is one of the most important responsibilities of an apex body like FIGSI. When the industry speaks with unity and clarity, its voice carries strength.

And as we work on today's challenges, we are equally focused on tomorrow's opportunities. We now stand less than one year away from STONA 2027.

This is not just a countdown to an exhibition. It is a countdown to one of the most important moments for the Indian stone industry on the global calendar. STONA has always represented ambition, craftsmanship, innovation, and India's natural stone excellence. Over the coming months, FIGSI will work with renewed energy to make STONA 2027 larger in reach, stronger in business impact, richer in experience, and more globally influential than ever before.

Our mission remains clear:
- To build a stronger industry.
- To empower every stakeholder.
- To create global opportunities.

And to ensure that natural stone continues to remain central to India's growth story. As we continue this journey together, let us remember that industries evolve when people move forward with belief, unity, and long-term vision.

The stone beneath our feet may be ancient, but the future we are building with it is entirely new.

Jai Hind. Jai FIGSI.

Ishwinder Singh
President
Federation of Indian
Granite & Stone Industry

MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Dear Members, Colleagues,
and Friends of the Stone Industry,

The past few months have reminded us that the natural stone industry stands at a defining point — one where resilience, adaptability, and collective action matter more than ever before.

As I continue my responsibilities as General Secretary of FIGSI, I feel encouraged by the growing unity and momentum visible across our industry. From exporters and quarry owners to processors, architects, machinery partners, and young entrepreneurs, there is a renewed determination to strengthen the future of Indian natural stone in both domestic and global markets.

In recent months, FIGSI has remained actively engaged on several fronts that directly impact the industry. Through continuous dialogue and representations with the Government of India, the federation has strongly voiced concerns and operational challenges faced by exporters during a volatile global trade environment.

These efforts reflect FIGSI's commitment to ensuring that the concerns of the industry are heard at the highest levels and translated into meaningful policy support.

At the same time, FIGSI's participation in major international stone exhibitions and trade fairs has further reinforced India's position as a leading global source for natural stone. Such engagements are essential for strengthening confidence in the quality, diversity, and capabilities of the Indian stone sector worldwide.

Another exciting milestone ahead of us is STONA 2027. Preparations are gathering momentum for what promises to be one of the most significant editions of the exhibition yet.

STONA has always been a symbol of the scale, ambition, and global potential of the Indian stone industry. It is also an opportunity to showcase not just products, but the strength of the entire ecosystem that powers our industry.

As we move forward, there is also a growing need for greater collaboration, faster adoption of technology, stronger communication, and more transparent business practices. The industries that will lead tomorrow are the ones that can combine heritage with innovation, craftsmanship with efficiency, and tradition with modern thinking.

India's natural stone sector has always carried immense strength, in its resources, but also greatly in the people who build it every day through hard work, entrepreneurship, and vision.

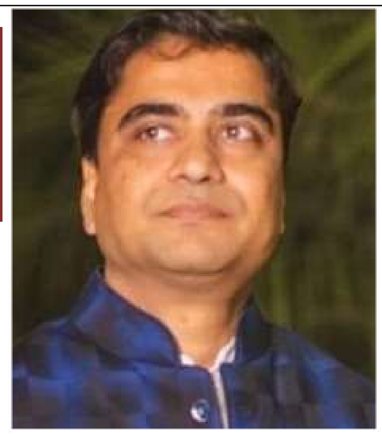
I sincerely thank all members, stakeholders, and well-wishers for their continued trust and support.

I look forward to working together as we continue building a stronger, more competitive, and globally respected future for Indian natural stone.

Thank you.
Warm regards,

Manoj Kumar Singh
General Secretary

CHAIRMAN OF EDITORIAL BOARD



Dear Readers,

It is a privilege to once again connect with you through the pages of Indian Stone. As I start my message, I want to reiterate that I remain deeply grateful to FIGSI and the industry fraternity for the trust placed in me as Chairman of the Magazine Sub Committee.

Over the years, *Indian Stone* has evolved into more than just a magazine. It has become a platform that reflects the pulse of our industry, documenting its progress, addressing its challenges, showcasing innovation, and preserving the stories that define our sector. This edition comes at a particularly important time for the industry, as global markets continue to navigate economic uncertainty, geopolitical volatility, and changing trade dynamics.

In this issue, we bring you perspectives on the broader economy, export markets, and the evolving position of the natural stone sector in an increasingly competitive global environment. These discussions are especially relevant as our industry adapts to shifting freight patterns, policy developments, sustainability expectations, and emerging opportunities.

At the same time, this edition also celebrates the depth, heritage, and uniqueness of natural stone. One of the highlights of this issue is a special feature on stone temple construction and the remarkable science behind it, exploring how traditional wisdom, engineering precision, material durability, and craftsmanship have combined for centuries to create structures that continue to inspire the world today.

We also feature an in-depth look at Kadapa Black Limestone, one of India's iconic natural stones, tracing its applications, legacy, and growing relevance in contemporary architecture and design.

Adding further richness to this edition are contributions from FIGSI members showcasing innovative stone products and applications. Such member-led contributions are vital in ensuring that the magazine remains rooted in the real experiences and expertise of the sector.

As we move ahead, *Indian Stone* will continue to evolve as a knowledge platform that connects stakeholders across quarrying, processing, design, machinery, exports, architecture, and policy.

We warmly encourage more members, architects, designers, researchers, and industry professionals to contribute articles, case studies, technical insights, market perspectives, and project features for future editions.

I would also like to sincerely thank our advertisers and partners whose continued support enables the magazine to expand its reach and impact. With every edition, *Indian Stone* is reaching wider audiences across industry, making it a valuable platform for visibility within the natural stone ecosystem.

On behalf of the editorial committee, I extend my gratitude to all contributors, readers, advertisers, and the FIGSI team for their continued support. We look forward to your feedback and active participation as we continue building *Indian Stone* into an even stronger platform for the industry.

Warm regards,
Anuj Modi
Chairman,
Magazine Sub Committee

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309TH EC MEETING

Term 2026-28

Above: FIGSI President Shri Ishwinder Singh addresses the gathering at 309th EC meeting held at Hotel Grand Sherton Bengaluru on 27th March 2026. Seen from L to R are Shri Shankaranarayanan, Vice President, Shri Kalit Bhandari, Vice President, Shri Arun Malhotra Vice President, Shri S Krishna Prasad, Immediate Past President, Shri R Veeramani, Founder President, Shri Ishwinder Singh, President, Shri Manoj Kumar Singh General Secretary, Shri Pramod Bhandari, Treasurer, Shri Sunder Somani, Vice President, Shri Hemanshu Sehgal, Chairman, STONA 2027 and Shri Sunil Bhandari, Chairman, Finance Sub Committee FIGSI.

FIGSI General Secretary Shri Manoj Kumar Singh addresses the 309th Executive Committee meeting. Also seen are Founder President Shri R Veeramani (extreme left) and President Shri Ishwinder Singh.

The 309th Executive Committee Meeting of the Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry (FIGSI) was successfully held in Bengaluru, bringing together office bearers, executive committee members, senior industry leaders, and regional representatives from across the country.

The meeting commenced with a welcome address by the leadership, followed by reports and discussions on the current status of the natural stone industry, emerging opportunities, upcoming STONA 2027 and key challenges impacting the sector.

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LETTER TO COMMERCE MINISTER

FIGSI urges Centre to strengthen export support for India's natural stone industry

Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry

FIGSI/MoC&I/ 358 12.01.2026

Shri Piyush Goyal
Hon'ble Minister for Commerce & Industry
Government of India
Room no. 501,
Vanijya Bhawan
New Delhi-110011

Respected Sir,

Sub : Representation Seeking Enhancement of Interest Subvention Limit and Rate

The **Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry (FIGSI)**, established over four decades ago, is the apex body representing the Indian natural stone sector. FIGSI serves as the unified voice of the industry across the entire value chain—from quarrying and processing to value addition and exports. With a pan-India presence, FIGSI today represents more than 1,600 members across the country.

The **Natural Stone Industry**, particularly the Granite Monument segment, has certain unique characteristics that distinguish it from other sectors. It is:

1. Highly labour-intensive
2. Predominantly rural-based
3. Largely driven by MSMEs

These attributes enable the industry to generate significant rural employment and inclusive economic growth, aligning closely with national priorities.

At present, the industry is facing unprecedented external challenges due to the imposition of a 50% tariff by the United States. This has had a severe impact on granite monument exports, as nearly 75% of our production is destined for the U.S. market. Owing to the prevailing uncertainty surrounding the tariff regime, U.S. importers have either deferred or temporarily **suspended orders from India**, resulting in a sharp decline in export bookings.

Further, exporters are experiencing intense margin pressure. U.S. buyers are seeking price **reductions in the range of 15–20%** to absorb the tariff impact. However, such reductions are not viable. Over the past decade, despite continuous increases in labour, power, logistics, and raw material costs, exporters have been unable to revise prices

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upward due to sustained competitive pressure—particularly from Chinese suppliers in the U.S. market. Any significant price reduction at this juncture would completely erode margins and threaten the financial viability of exporters.

In parallel, the industry is also facing acute working capital stress. Traditionally, exporters have extended credit periods of 30–60 days to U.S. buyers. In the current environment, US importers are now **demanding extended credit terms of 120–150 days.** This has materially lengthened export realization cycles, adversely impacting cash flows and liquidity across the sector.

Against this challenging backdrop, we are profoundly thankful to our Government's timely support through the introduction of the Interest Subvention Scheme under Trade Notification No. 20/2025–26 dated 02.01.2026. This initiative has provided much-needed relief and reassurance to exporters during a difficult phase.

However, since the maximum subvention limit has been capped at ₹50 lakhs, many exporters are unable to avail the benefit for their full eligible export turnover. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the scheme and ensure meaningful support to MSME exporters, we humbly request your kind consideration for:

- Enhancement of the maximum interest subvention limit from ₹50 lakhs to ₹100 lakhs, and
- An increase in the subvention rate to 3% from the notified 2.75%.

Your timely intervention on these requests would go a long way in sustaining this labour-intensive, rural-centric industry during a period of global uncertainty. Given that our products are highly specialised and that our export markets are largely limited to the USA and select European countries, enhanced interest support is critical for the survival, stability, and continuity of the sector.

We remain confident of your continued support and shall be deeply grateful for your sympathetic consideration.

Thanking you,

With regards

Ishwinder Singh
President

Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry
Bangalore

In a strong representation to the Government of India, the Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry (FIGSI) has appealed for enhanced financial support measures to safeguard the country's natural stone exports amid growing global challenges. The letter, addressed to Union Commerce & Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal, highlights the severe pressure faced by India's granite monument exporters due to increased tariffs, shrinking margins, and prolonged payment cycles in international markets.

Led by FIGSI President Ishwinder Singh, the industry body has sought an increase in the Interest Subvention Scheme limit from ₹50 lakhs to ₹100 lakhs, along with a rise in the subvention rate to 3%. The representation underscores the importance of timely intervention to protect thousands of MSME exporters and sustain employment across quarrying, processing, logistics, and exports. The letter notes that nearly 75% of India's granite monument production is dependent on the U.S. market, where exporters are currently facing uncertainty due to steep tariffs and demands for extended credit terms.

FIGSI emphasized that the sector, which is highly labour-intensive and rural-driven, is critical for inclusive economic growth and livelihoods across the country.

Under the leadership of Ishwinder Singh, FIGSI has continued to actively advocate for the interests of the Indian stone industry, engaging with policymakers to ensure stability, competitiveness, and long-term sustainability for exporters during a challenging global trade environment.

FIGSI seeks inclusion of more stone products under Export Interest Subvention Scheme

The Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry (FIGSI) has intensified its push for stronger export support measures by submitting representations to both Union Commerce & Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal and the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), seeking broader inclusion of natural stone products under the Interest Subvention Scheme for Pre- and Post-Shipment Export Credit.

In a representation addressed to DGFT Director General Shri Lav Agarwal, FIGSI President Ishwinder Singh highlighted the need to include additional HSN codes covering key natural stone products such as marble slabs, granite tiles, granite slabs, granite blocks, marble blocks, and sandstone slabs.

The federation stated that while a few granite-related HSN codes have already been included, several major export categories that contribute significantly to India's stone exports remain outside the scope of the scheme.

FIGSI emphasized that the natural stone industry is a major contributor to employment generation, MSME growth, and foreign exchange earnings, with more than 1,600 member companies represented by the federation across India.

The representation also requested retrospective extension of the benefit so exporters who have already executed shipments under these HSN codes during the current period can also receive relief.

With global trade conditions becoming increasingly competitive, FIGSI has been consistently working to ensure that Indian exporters receive timely institutional and financial support. The federation noted that several value-added stone products, despite contributing significantly to exports and employment, are currently outside the ambit of the scheme, limiting relief for many MSMEs in the sector. Through this representation, FIGSI has sought a more inclusive approach that reflects the full diversity and economic importance of India's natural stone industry.

Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry

FIGSI/MoC&I/67 25.02.2026

Shri Piyush Goyal
Hon'ble Minister for Commerce & Industry
Government of India
Room no. 501,
Vanijya Bhawan
New Delhi-110011

Respected Sir,

Subject: Request for Inclusion of Additional HSN Codes under Interest Subvention Scheme

Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry (FIGSI) is a non-profit, all-India apex body representing the natural stone industry for over four decades. With more than 1,600 members across the country, the Federation acts as a vital bridge between the industry and various State and Central Government Departments.

We wish to bring to your kind attention that in the recently published list of Tariff Lines eligible for Interest Subvention for Pre- and Post-Shipment Export Credit, only the following granite-related HS Codes have been included:

- **680293** – Granite; articles thereof (other than simply cut or sawn, with a flat or even surface)
- **680299** – Natural stone (excluding marble, travertine, alabaster, other calcareous stone or granite), monumental or building stone (other than simply cut or sawn, with a flat or even surface)

However, several key products of the natural stone sector—such as granite, marble, and sandstone—fall under the following HSN codes, which are currently not included in the eligible list:

HSN CODE	NAME
68022190	Marble Slab
68022310	Granite Tiles
68022390	Graite Slabs
25161100	Granite Block
25151210	Marble Blocks
25162000	Sandstone Slabs

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These products constitute a significant share of India's natural stone exports and contribute substantially to employment generation and foreign exchange earnings.

In view of the above, we respectfully request your good office to kindly consider including the aforementioned HSN codes under the list of Tariff Lines eligible for Interest Subvention for Pre- and Post-Shipment Export Credit. Such inclusion would greatly support exporters in the natural stone sector and enhance India's competitiveness in global markets.

We further request that the benefit of the scheme may kindly be extended retrospectively, so that exporters who have already executed shipments under these HSN codes during the current period may also receive the intended relief.

We shall be deeply grateful for your kind consideration and continued support to the natural stone industry.

With regards,

Ishwinder Singh
President
Mobile: 9829017377

FIGSI/MoC&I/68 25.02.2026

Shri Lav Agarwal
Additional Secretary &
Director General of Foreign Trade
1, Vanijya Bhawan,
'A' Wing, 16 Akbar Road,
New Delhi - 110011

Left: Similar letter as above was also addressed to the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT).

LETTER TO COMMERCE MINISTER

FIGSI's persistence helps secure extension of RoDTEP support for stone exporters

The Government of India officially extended the RoDTEP (Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products) Scheme till September 30, 2026.

Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry

FIGSI/MoC&I/471 26.02.2026

Shri Piyush Goyal
Hon'ble Minister for Commerce & Industry
Government of India
Room no. 501,
Vanijya Bhawan
New Delhi-110011

Respected Sir,

Subject: Request for Long-Term Extension of RoDTEP and Revision of Rates for the Natural Stone Industry

Reference: HSN Codes – 68022390, 68022190, 68022310 & 25162000

We write on behalf of the Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry (FIGSI), the apex body representing over 1,600 members across India engaged in quarrying, processing, and export of natural stone. The Federation serves as a bridge between the industry and the Government, advocating policies that strengthen India's competitiveness in global markets.

At the outset, we wish to place on record that the natural stone industry is:

- Predominantly rural-based, operating largely in backward districts and contributing significantly to rural employment and local economic development.
- Highly labour-intensive, supporting a workforce of over 1,50,000 persons across processing, handling, and support services.
- Inclusive in nature, employing personnel across all skill levels—from unskilled labour to technically qualified professionals.
- Driven primarily by first-generation entrepreneurs, with strong potential to encourage new investments and young entrepreneurs if policy stability is ensured.
- Closely aligned with the **Make in India** initiative, as the majority of inputs are domestically sourced.

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We respectfully submit that as per DGFT Notification No. 60/2025-26, the RoDTEP rates and value caps for our products have been reduced by 50%. This has had a significant adverse impact on the sector at a time when global demand is subdued and margins are under severe pressure.

Justification for Enhancement of RoDTEP Rates

The primary objective of RoDTEP is to neutralize embedded taxes and duties that are not otherwise refunded. However, in our industry, a substantial portion of such embedded costs—particularly those related to fuel, power, and logistics—remain unneutralized under the present rate of 0.5%.

1. **High Raw Material and Transportation Cost:**

   Granite and marble rough blocks are transported from distant quarries to factories. Raw material accounts for 45–50% of the total cost of production. Of this, nearly 35–40% is transportation-related. In effect, about 15–20% of the overall cost structure is attributable purely to the transportation of rough blocks, heavily linked to fuel costs.

2. **Energy-Intensive Production:**

   Our industry operates energy-intensive, heavy-duty processing and material-handling equipment, leading to substantial power and fuel consumption. Additionally, during power outages or disruptions, we are compelled to run high-capacity diesel generators to maintain uninterrupted operations. This significantly increases our overall operational/ energy costs and impacts our competitiveness in the global market.

3. **High Export Logistics Costs:**

   Natural stone is highly dense and heavy, resulting in higher inland freight costs to ports. Exports are primarily shipped in 20/40 ft containers, and increasing truck transportation charges have further escalated costs.

   In essence, while our industry is labour-intensive, it is equally energy- and logistics-intensive. The current RoDTEP rate of 0.5% does not adequately neutralize the embedded taxes related to fuel and energy, which remain a major cost component.

   In view of the above, we earnestly request that the RoDTEP rate for our HSN codes (68022390, 68022190, 68022310, 25162000) be revised upward to a minimum of 2%, especially since the value cap remains above 2% even after the recent amendment. Such a revision will partially restore competitiveness and align the benefit with the scheme's core objective.

Request for Long-Term Extension

Further, we request that the RoDTEP scheme be extended for a minimum period of three years beyond 31st March 2026. Policy certainty over a longer horizon is essential for export-oriented industries to plan investments, manage working capital, and commit to international buyers with confidence.

The industry is currently facing intense price competition globally, along with extended credit cycles that are putting significant strain on working capital and margins. A stable and adequately structured RoDTEP regime will provide much-needed relief and help sustain employment across rural and semi-urban regions.

We sincerely request your kind consideration and timely intervention to support and strengthen the natural stone export sector, which contributes meaningfully to foreign exchange earnings and rural economic growth.

We shall be grateful for a favourable consideration of our representation.

With regards,

Ishwinder Singh
President
Mobile: 98280 17377

In a significant relief for India's natural stone exporters, the Government of India has officially extended the RoDTEP (Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products) Scheme for a further six months, from April 1, 2026 to September 30, 2026. The extension ensures continuation of benefits for eligible export products at existing rates and value caps, providing stability to exporters navigating a challenging global market environment.

The development comes after sustained representations and policy advocacy by FIGSI, which had actively engaged with the Government seeking both a long-term extension of the scheme and a revision in RoDTEP rates for natural stone products. In detailed submissions addressed to Union Commerce & Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal, FIGSI highlighted the severe pressures faced by the sector. Led by FIGSI President Ishwinder Singh, the federation also requested a higher RoDTEP rate for key stone products, noting that the existing 0.5% support level was insufficient to offset embedded costs borne by exporters.

LETTER TO COMMERCE MINISTER

FIGSI calls for five-year RoDTEP extension to safeguard India's natural stone exports

The Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry (FIGSI) has urged the Government of India to introduce a long-term extension of the RoDTEP (Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products) Scheme for the natural stone sector, citing mounting global pressures and rising operational costs impacting exporters across the country.

In a representation addressed to Union Commerce & Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal, FIGSI requested that the RoDTEP scheme be extended for a minimum period of five years beyond March 31, 2026, along with an upward revision in rates to better offset embedded taxes and levies faced by exporters.

The federation highlighted that the natural stone export sector is currently navigating one of its most challenging phases, with weak global demand, volatile freight conditions, rising energy costs, and increasing geopolitical uncertainties disrupting trade flows. FIGSI noted that exporters are also facing delayed orders, extended credit periods from overseas buyers, and growing working capital stress, all of which are affecting production planning and liquidity across the sector.

The representation emphasized that the natural stone industry is highly capital-intensive and export-dependent, with thousands of MSMEs and lakhs of workers dependent on stable export demand for livelihoods.

FIGSI stated that a predictable, long-duration RoDTEP framework would provide much-needed policy certainty, strengthen liquidity support, and help Indian exporters remain competitive in international markets.

The appeal forms part of FIGSI's broader and sustained engagement with policymakers to ensure timely support for the natural stone sector during a period of significant global economic and trade challenges.

Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry

FIGSI/MoC&I/477 04.03.2026

Shri Piyush Goyal
Hon'ble Minister for Commerce & Industry
Government of India
Room no. 501,
Vanijya Bhawan
New Delhi-110011

Respected Sir,

Subject: **Urgent Request for Five-Year Extension and Upward Revision of RoDTEP for the Natural Stone Export Sector**

On behalf of the Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry (FIGSI), representing India's natural stone industry, we respectfully submit this representation seeking urgent policy support through a long-term extension and strengthening of the RoDTEP Scheme since the scheme is expiring by 31st March 2026.

The natural stone export sector is currently facing severe headwinds arising from global economic and geopolitical uncertainties. Export orders from the United States have come under considerable pressure, as buyers are deferring confirmations and slowing procurement decisions. This has adversely affected fresh order inflows and production planning.

European customers are increasingly requesting extended credit terms, significantly stretching the export realisation cycle and placing heavy stress on working capital management. Simultaneously, ongoing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East have led to shipping disruptions, transit delays, and elevated logistics risks. As production costs—including raw materials, energy, labour, and finance—are incurred upfront, delays in shipment and payment result in substantial capital blockage and liquidity strain.

The natural stone industry is highly capital-intensive and export-dependent. In the current environment of rising costs, volatile freight conditions, and uncertain demand, policy stability and institutional support are critical to sustain competitiveness and employment.

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In light of the above, we humbly request the Government to:

1. Extend the RoDTEP Scheme for a minimum period of five (5) years to provide stability, predictability, and long-term confidence to exporters.
2. Consider an upward revision of the RoDTEP refund rates, so as to adequately neutralize embedded taxes and levies and mitigate the mounting cost pressures faced by the industry.

A strengthened and long-duration RoDTEP framework will provide immediate liquidity support, improve export viability, protect employment across the value chain, and preserve India's global market share in natural stone exports.

We earnestly seek your timely and positive intervention to safeguard this vital export sector during this challenging period.

With regards,

Ishwinder Singh
President
Mobile: 98290 17377

LETTER TO COMMERCE MINISTER

FIGSI seeks urgent relief for exporters amid Emergency War Surcharge on Gulf shipments

The Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry (FIGSI) has approached Union Commerce & Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal seeking immediate intervention following the sudden imposition of an Emergency War Surcharge on shipments moving to Gulf countries due to the prevailing regional situation.

In its representation, FIGSI highlighted that exporters and freight forwarders are already operating under severe financial pressure amid fluctuating freight rates, weak global demand, and intense international competition. The federation noted that the newly imposed surcharge of USD 2000 per container has created an unexpected burden on exporters, particularly for shipments that had already been booked and committed before the surcharge announcement.

FIGSI emphasized that most export shipments to the Gulf are executed on a C&F basis, meaning the additional cost cannot easily be passed on to overseas buyers after contracts are finalized. The sudden implementation of the surcharge, without prior intimation or advisory, has therefore placed exporters in a difficult position, impacting margins, working capital, and shipment commitments.

The federation warned that retrospective application of such charges could lead to cargo cancellations, disruptions in export operations, and further financial stress for exporters already dealing with challenging market conditions.

Through the representation, FIGSI requested the Government to waive the Emergency War Surcharge for previously booked shipments or provide special consideration for cargo under confirmed bookings. The federation stated that timely intervention would help maintain smooth trade operations and protect exporters contributing significantly to India's foreign exchange earnings and international trade presence.

Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry

FIGSI/MoC&I/ 05.03.2026

Shri Piyush Goyal
Hon'ble Minister for Commerce & Industry
Government of India
Room no. 501,
Vanijya Bhawan
New Delhi-110011

Respected Sir,

We write on behalf of the **Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry (FIGSI)**, a 43-year-old apex body representing over **1,600 members across India** engaged in the **quarrying, processing, and export of natural stone.** The Federation serves as a vital bridge between the industry and the Government, actively advocating for policies that strengthen **India's competitiveness in global markets** and promote the sustainable growth of the natural stone sector.

We have been informed that an Emergency War Surcharge of USD 2000 per container has been imposed on shipments moving to the Gulf sector due to the current America-Israel-Iran war situation.

In this regard, we would like to bring to your kind attention that exporters (shippers) & Forwarders are already operating on very low margins, and such a sudden surcharge creates a serious financial burden on them. Most of the shipments were booked and committed to overseas buyers before the announcement of this surcharge, and therefore the cost cannot be recovered from the consignee.

Further, at the time of booking, no prior information or advisory regarding this surcharge was communicated to us, and therefore it was not possible to inform the shipper in advance or incorporate the cost in the export contract.

From the shipper's point of view, the sudden imposition of such a high surcharge is extremely difficult to absorb. Many exporters are already facing challenges in

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international trade due to freight fluctuations and market competition. If such additional charges are applied retrospectively, it will severely impact export commitments and may even lead to cargo cancellations.

As exporters are key contributors to India's international trade and foreign exchange earnings, matters affecting export costs are often reviewed by relevant government authorities and trade bodies to ensure smooth trade operations.

Therefore, we kindly request your good office to **waive the Emergency War Surcharge for shipments that have already been booked**, or at least provide **special consideration for cargo under confirmed bookings.** As most of these shipments are on a **C&F basis**, the sudden imposition of this surcharge places an **unexpected financial burden on exporters.**

Your support in this matter will greatly help the exporters maintain their commitments and continue business smoothly.

We look forward to your kind cooperation and positive response.

We request that this matter be treated as most urgent.

With regards,

Ishwinder Singh
President
Mobile: 98290 17377

LETTER TO COMMERCE MINISTER

FIGSI raises urgent BTT shipment issue at Mundra Port, seeks immediate Government intervention

The Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry (FIGSI) has written to Union Commerce & Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal highlighting a serious operational issue affecting exporters at Mundra Port following the recent Middle East crisis.

According to the representation, several shipments originally destined for Gulf countries were redirected and returned to Mundra under the Back to Town (BTT) category. However, due to the shipping line filing the IGM (Import General Manifest) as a normal import shipment, Customs systems automatically imposed nearly 40% import duty despite the cargo not being intended for import into India.

FIGSI stated that exporters and CHAs were subsequently instructed to file Bills of Entry, creating procedural complications and financial exposure for shipments that were merely returning under BTT classification. While Customs authorities reportedly advised that the existing IGM should be cancelled and refiled correctly under the BTT category, shipping lines informed stakeholders that they did not have the authority to cancel the IGM, leading to a complete procedural deadlock.

The federation warned that the delay is causing mounting detention and demurrage charges on containers, with costs increasing daily and placing severe stress on exporters, freight forwarders, and logistics stakeholders. Many businesses are facing uncertainty over cargo clearance timelines and escalating financial losses.

In its appeal, FIGSI requested urgent intervention from the Government and concerned authorities to resolve the issue immediately and provide operational relief to the trade. The federation emphasized that timely resolution is essential to protect exporters from avoidable financial damage and restore smooth movement of cargo at the port.

Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry

FIGSI/MoC&I/023 30.04.2026

Shri Piyush Goyal
Hon'ble Minister for Commerce & Industry
Government of India
Room no. 501,
Vanijya Bhawan
New Delhi-110011

Respected Sir,

We write on behalf of the **Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry (FIGSI)**, a 43-year-old apex body representing over **1,600 members across India** engaged in the **quarrying, processing, and export of natural stone**. The Federation serves as a vital bridge between the industry and the Government, actively advocating for policies that strengthen **India's competitiveness in global markets** and promote the sustainable growth of the natural stone sector.

We would like to bring to your kind attention a serious operational issue currently being faced at **Mundra Port** regarding **Back to Town (BTT) shipments**, which requires immediate intervention from the concerned authorities.

Due to the recent **Middle East war crisis**, several shipments were redirected and returned to Mundra Port under the **BTT category**. However, the shipping line has filed the **IGM (Import General Manifest)** as a normal import shipment as per their internal customs guidance.

Based on the filed IGM, we were required to submit the **Bill of Entry**. During the filing process, when our CHA entered the **HSN code**, the Customs system automatically imposed approximately **40% import duty**, which is not applicable in the case of **BTT shipments**, as these goods are not intended for import into India.

Upon raising this issue with the Customs authorities, we were advised that the **existing IGM must be cancelled** and a **new IGM should be filed correctly under**

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the BTT category. Furthermore, Customs informed us that the **IGM cancellation must be initiated by the shipping line**, as they were the original filing party.

However, when we approached the shipping line representatives, they stated that they **do not have the authority to cancel the IGM**, resulting in a procedural deadlock between the concerned parties.

In this situation, as freight forwarders and stakeholders, we are facing significant confusion and operational difficulty. Meanwhile, **detention and demurrage charges from the shipping line are increasing daily**, causing substantial financial losses to the shipper and trade community.

Therefore, we humbly request to kindly take up this matter on an urgent basis and provide necessary guidance or relief to resolve this issue at the earliest.

Your timely support and intervention will be highly appreciated to safeguard the interests of exporters and the trade community.

Thanking you in anticipation of your cooperation.

With regards,

Ishwinder Singh

Ishwinder Singh
President
Mobile: 98290 17377

The Force Powering India's Stone Industry

The Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry (FIGSI) stands as the unified voice of India's natural stone sector, representing a dynamic industry rooted in history yet driven by innovation.

Established in 1983, the organization was formed to address challenges in quarrying, processing, and exports, and to bring structure and growth to a fragmented industry. Over four decades, it has played a crucial role in policy advocacy, contributing to landmark frameworks such as the Granite and Marble Conservation and Development Rules, and acting as a bridge between industry and government.

FIGSI's impact extends beyond representation. It actively promotes technological advancement, global competitiveness, skilling in the stone industry and knowledge sharing through conferences, workshops, and international exhibitions like STONA, one of the world's largest stone fairs.

India's stone legacy dates back thousands of years, and today the country is among the global leaders in granite, marble, sandstone, and other dimensional stones. In this evolving landscape, FIGSI continues to position itself as a catalyst for sustainable growth, innovation, and international collaboration.

40+
YEARS OF ADVOCACY

1600+
INDUSTRY MEMBERS

100+
INDUSTRY EVENTS & MEETS

FIGSI President Ishwinder Singh (right) and General Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh.

FIGSI drives excellence in stone though vairous initiatives like STONA, crating offline and online knowledge platforms, powering digital growth and industry impact.

A defining pillar of FIGSI's influence is STONA, one of the largest international stone exhibitions in the world. Hosted in Bengaluru, STONA has evolved into a global convergence point for architects, designers, manufacturers, and buyers.

It showcases not only India's rich variety of natural stones but also the latest advancements in machinery, design aesthetics, and sustainable practices.

Complementing this global platform is FIGSI's strong focus on knowledge exchange through seminars, conferences, and technical forums. These engagements bring together industry experts, policymakers, and international thought leaders to discuss regulations, market dynamics, and emerging technologies.

Such initiatives ensure that Indian stakeholders remain informed, agile, and globally competitive.

In recent years, FIGSI has also embraced digital transformation as a key growth driver.

From promoting digital marketing of stone products to encouraging the adoption of automation, CAD-based design, and trade platforms, the Federation is helping the industry align with global digital trends.

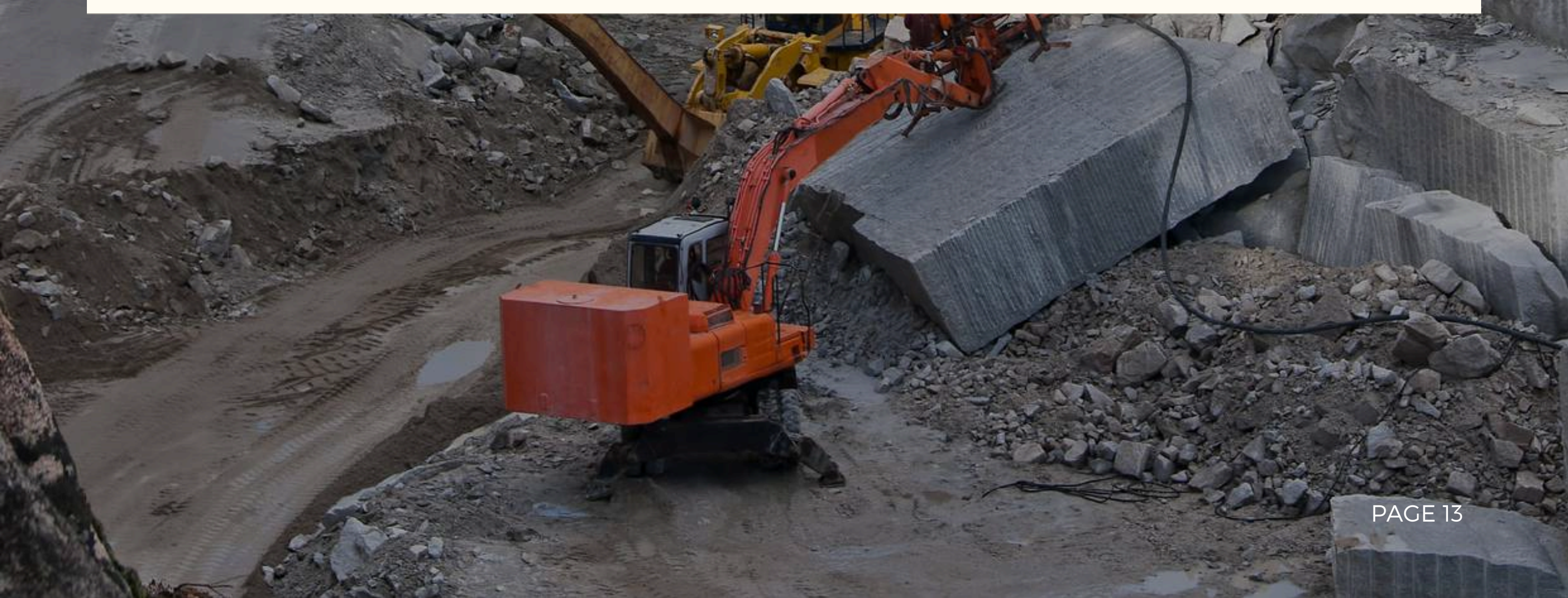
Collectively, these initiatives have had a profound impact, strengthening India's global standing in the natural stone sector while fostering innovation, professionalism, and sustainable growth across the value chain.

A global celeration of stone, tools & businesses

STONA 2027
17th INTERNATIONAL GRANITE & STONE FAIR
06-09, May 2027
Bengaluru, India

STONA is one of the largest natural stone trade fair in the world, the meeting ground where the entire value chain comes face to face. Hosted in Bengaluru, it has evolved into a global convergence point for architects, designers, manufacturers, and buyers. It showcases not only India's rich variety of natural stones but also the latest advancements in machinery, design aesthetics, and sustainable practices.

Scan QR code to register your interest & learn more



THE SURFACE STORY

FIGSI meets Surfaces@Work

Connecting stone, surfaces & global design trends

As India's construction and design sectors continue to evolve, Surfaces@Work, in collaboration with FIGSI – Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry, brings renewed focus to the role of natural stone, surfaces, and advanced materials in shaping the future of the built environment.

Representing India's natural stone industry since 1983, FIGSI has been instrumental in promoting the country's granite and stone sector across domestic and international markets, while supporting innovation, exports, sustainability, and the adoption of modern processing technologies. The collaboration with Surfaces@ Work reflects a shared commitment to strengthening industry dialogue across architecture, interiors, construction, and material innovation.

The timing is significant. India's building materials market, valued at USD 44.4 billion in 2025, is projected to reach USD 64.5 billion by 2034, driven by rapid urbanization, infrastructure expansion, and increasing investments across residential and commercial construction. Government-led initiatives such as Smart Cities Mission and Housing for All are further accelerating demand for high-performance, sustainable, and design-led building materials.

At the same time, technological advancements are reshaping the sector. The growing adoption of

SURFACES @WORK
Innovation to Application
07 08 09 August, 2026
Yashobhoomi (IICC), Dwarka, New Delhi

smart and high-performance materials is redefining durability, sustainability, and architectural performance. Within this evolving ecosystem, natural stone continues to hold strong relevance for its versatility, longevity, aesthetic value, and increasing integration into contemporary architectural and interior applications. Backed by the global exhibition expertise of NürnbergMesse, Surfaces@Work serves as a platform for meaningful industry engagement, bringing together architects, designers, developers, material specialists, manufacturers, and solution providers from across the construction value chain. Through NürnbergMesse's expanding construction portfolio which also includes events such as INDEXPLUS and INDIAWOOD, the initiative continues to connect global trends with India's rapidly growing market for surfaces, stone, finishes, and advanced building materials.

For more information, log on to: www.surfacesatwork.com

INDUSTRY CONNECT
India Stonemart 2026

FIGSI leads the conversation at Stonemart

FIGSI President Shri Ishwinder Singh, General Secretary Shri Manoj Kumar Singh, STONA 2027 Chairman Shri Hemanshu Sehgal with FIGSI Executive Committee memebrs at the FIGSI stand at India Stonemart 2026 in Jaipur, Rajasthan. Below: FIGSI Office bearers with industry representatives at the stand. Bottom: A wide shot of the FIGSI stand at the stone exhibition.

FIGSI successfully participated in India Stonemart 2026 at Jaipur, Rajasthan, engaging with the stone fraternity and strengthening industry ties. Located at Hall 1, Stand 71–73, the FIGSI stand was abuzz with meaningful conversations, new connections, and strong industry participation. On all four exhibition days, the stand witnessed enthusiastic interactions with stakeholders, partners, and visitors from across the world, reflecting the growing momentum of the stone sector and increasing reach of FIGSI. FIGSI also used the platform to promote STONA 2027, the largest Indian stone exhibition being organised from May 6-9, 2027.

INDUSTRY CONNECT India Stonemart 2026

Glimpses from FIGSI's grand participation at India Stonemart at Jaipur from February 5-8, 2026.

INDUSTRY CONNECT

India Stonemart 2026

Turkish businesses at STONA

Participation agreement with partners from Turkey

FIGSI President Shri Ishwinder Singh, Immediate Past President Shri S Krishna Prasad, General Secretary Shri Manoj Kumar Singh, STONA 2027 Chairman Shri Hemanshu Sehgal, STONA 2027 Co-Chariman Shri Laxmikant Jain with FIGSI's partner from Turkey, Mr Ali Gokhan.

The signing reflects the growing global confidence in STONA 2027 and sets the tone for a truly world-class exhibition.

Chinese businesses at STONA

Agreement on participation with partners from China

FIGSI President Shri Ishwinder Singh, Immediate Past President Shri S Krishna Prasad, General Secretary Shri Manoj Kumar Singh, STONA 2027 Chairman Shri Hemanshu Sehgal, STONA 2027 Co-Chariman Shri Laxmikant Jain with FIGSI's partners from China.

The growing international participation signals rising global confidence in STONA 2027 and reinforces its position as a truly world-class exhibition.

Iranian businesses at STONA

Iranian stone business presence at STONA secured

FIGSI President Shri Ishwinder Singh, Immediate Past President Shri S Krishna Prasad, General Secretary Shri Manoj Kumar Singh, STONA 2027 Chairman Shri Hemanshu Sehgal, STONA 2027 Co-Chariman Shri Laxmikant Jain and FIGSI Office Bearers with FIGSI's partner from Iran, Mr Mohammad Halajian.

Robust international participation reflects rising global faith in STONA 2027.

NǏ HǍO CHINA

Xiamen Stone Fair, China

FIGSI leads India’s presence at Xiamen

Shri DK Suresh (third from left), Former Member of Parliament from Karnataka, with FIGSI Office Bearers, at the FIGSI stand at the Xiamen Stone Fair, China.

FIGSI marked a strong presence at Xiamen Stone Fair, China, held from March 16 to March 19, 2026, showcasing the strength, diversity and global potential of India’s stone, tools and machines industry while engaging with the global business community.

FIGSI was also honoured to host Shri DK Suresh, former Member of Parliament from Karnataka, at the FIGSI Stand during the fair, a proud moment reflecting India’s leadership and active participation in the global stone industry.

Left to right: STONA 2027 Chairman Shri Hemanshu Sehgal, FIGSI Executive Committee Member Shri Rajesh Angara. FIGSI President Shri Ishwinder Singh, and FIGSI General Secretary Shri Manoj Kumar Singh.

SPASIBO RUSSIA

MosBuild, Russia

FIGSI builds bridges from India to Russia

The Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry (FIGSI) proudly showcased the strength and diversity of Indian natural stones at MosBuild Russia, one of the largest construction and building material exhibitions in the region.

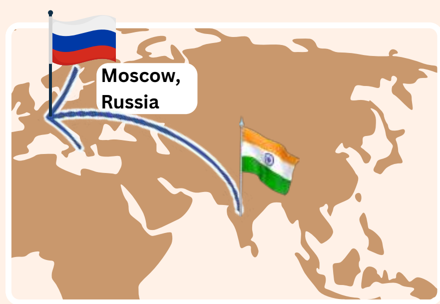
MosBuild 2026 was held from 31 March to 3 April 2026 at the Crocus Expo International Exhibition Centre, Moscow.

With a strong presence, FIGSI highlighted India's world-class stones, craftsmanship & innovation to a global audience, opening new avenues for trade and collaboration.

- Strengthening global connections
- Expanding export opportunities
- Promoting Indian stone, tools & machines excellence

Officials from the Trade Mission of the Indian Embassy in Russia with Shri Naresh Bansal, Joint Secretary and Shri Anuj Modi, Chairman, Editorial Board, FIGSI, at MosBuild Fair, Russia.

Representative from Turkish fair with FIGSI Office Bearers at the FIGSI stand.



MosBuild is held at Moscow. Moscow's historic role as a major commercial and architectural centre makes it a strategic hub for showcasing global building materials and design innovations.

MosBuild is Russia's largest international building and interiors exhibition, bringing together architects, designers, construction companies, material suppliers, and industry professionals in Moscow.

Established in 1995, the exhibition has grown into one of Eastern Europe's leading trade platforms for construction, interiors, and building technologies.

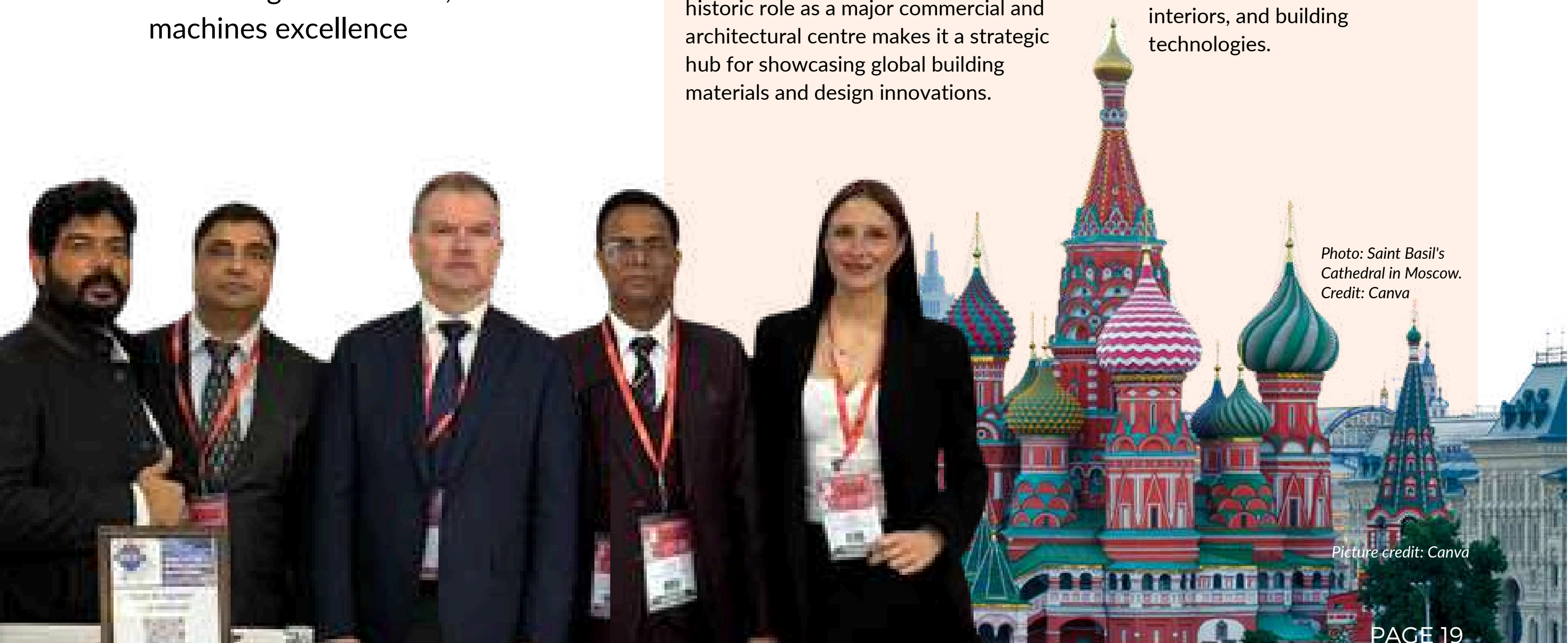
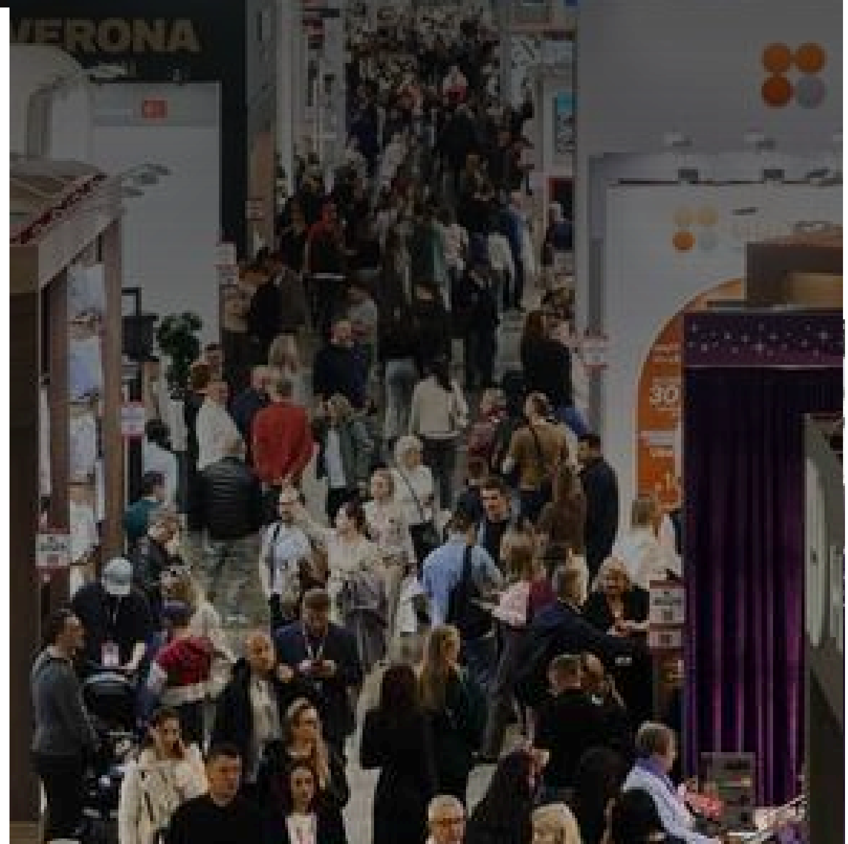


Photo: Saint Basil's Cathedral in Moscow. Credit: Canva

Picture credit: Canva

Indian stone brands shine mark at Eurasia's biggest stage at MosBuild



MosBuild 2026, held from 31 March to 3 April at Crocus Expo, Moscow, concluded as the most successful edition in the show's 31-year history, and for India's natural stone industry, it marked a defining moment.

Under the banner of the **FIGSI x MosBuild strategic alliance**, Indian granite and stone manufacturers showcased their finest products to over 80,000 construction and interiors professionals from across Russia, the CIS, and 51 countries worldwide.

India's Industry Steps onto the Global Stage
For the first time under a formalised strategic alliance between MosBuild and FIGSI, Indian manufacturers participated as a unified national contingent, presenting India's world-class natural stone capabilities to one of the most commercially active construction audiences in the world.

Russia's construction market, valued at over USD 185 billion, is in a period of sustained growth. Demand for premium natural stone — granite countertops, marble flooring, decorative sandstone, and architectural quartzite — has been rising sharply across residential, commercial, and public infrastructure projects. MosBuild served as the direct gateway for Indian exporters to meet the architects, developers, and procurement heads shaping that demand.

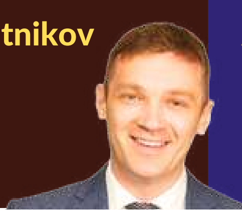
A Milestone for India's Stone Export Community
For FIGSI and its members, MosBuild 2026 represented a strategic step forward in diversifying export markets. With Russia and the CIS emerging as high-priority growth destinations, the show validated India's positioning and the structured buyer meetings, content sessions, and networking events gave participating companies the tools to act on it immediately.

Mosbuild 2026 – By the Numbers

87,000+	Unique professional visitors from 84 regions of Russia and 45 countries
1,300+	International and Russian exhibitors across 17 product sectors
4 Days	31 March – 3 April 2026 — the busiest construction sourcing window of the year
17 Product Sectors	Featuring 17 dedicated sectors, MosBuild covers every aspect of construction, finishing, and decoration.
31st Edition	Over three decades as Eurasia's premier building and interiors trade show

"MosBuild 2026 has reinforced India's position as a serious and high-quality partner for Russia's construction market. The engagement we saw between Indian Exhibitors and Russian buyers was exceptional. This is just the beginning of what this partnership can deliver."

Yakov Syromyatnikov
Group Event Director, MosBuild



"Our collaboration with MosBuild has opened doors for the entire stone export community. We've been able to spotlight the high-value opportunities waiting and provide a clear roadmap for market entry. Thanks to MosBuild, our exporters are better positioned to capitalize on it."

Anuj Modi
Chairman, Editorial Board Sub Committee, FIGSI

"Coming to MosBuild was a turning point for me. It challenged my previous perceptions of the Russian market & replaced them with a powerful vision of growth ahead. The opportunities are substantial & real. My belief in this market's potential has never been higher."

Saurabh Bafna
Director, Marudhar Stones Indian exporter

MERHABA TÜRKIYE

Marble Izmir, Turkey

FIGSI's strong show at İzmir Stone Fair

FIGSI proudly led industry participation at Marble İzmir 2026, Turkey engaging with global stakeholders and showcasing the strength of India's natural stone sector. Marble İzmir 2026 was held from 14–17 April 2026 at Fuar İzmir in İzmir.

FIGSI delegates took the opportunity to promote STONA 2027 as well. Even amid ongoing global volatility, there is growing interest in Indian stone products and the market at large. The enthusiasm and conversations reaffirm India's position as a trusted and resilient partner in the global stone industry.

Group photo of Smt Ajitha Joy, Joint Secretary, FIGSI and Shri Laxmikant Jain, Co-Chairman, STONA 2027 with fair promotors Ms Irem Baytas, Group Manager Ladin (extreme right), Istanbul along with colleagues.

FIGSI delegates with Ms Maria, Organiser of Moscow Stone Fair.

Figsi Office Bearers with Mrs Ziba Yazdani, General Secretary of Iran Stone Association.

Ms Deniz Eralp from TG Expo, FIGSI partner for Jakarta Surface Show at the FIGSI stand.

Marble İzmir is an international natural stone exhibitions, bringing together industry professionals at İzmir, Türkiye. It was officially launched as an international fair in 1995, though its origins trace back to the "İzmir Marble Days" event first held in 1989. İzmir sits near some of Türkiye's richest marble-producing regions and has been connected to the stone trade since olden times.

Photo: Izmir clock tower. Credit: Canva

FIGSI AT THE GRASSROOTS

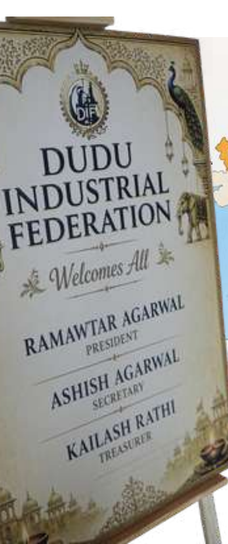
Dudu Industrial Federation felicitates FIGSI President & regional leadership

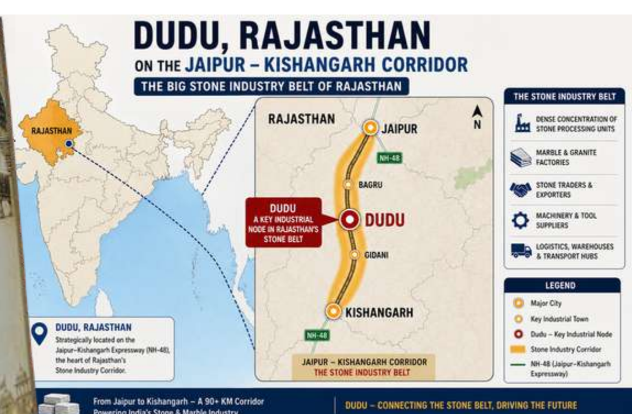
Shri Ramawter Agarwal, President, Dudu Industrial Federation, felicitates Shri Ishwinder Singh, President, FIGSI at Golden Cressida Resort & Palace, Dudu, Rajasthan on 22nd April 2026.

In a significant step toward strengthening regional industry engagement, the Dudu Industrial Federation organized a felicitation and interaction meet in Dudu, Rajasthan, to honour FIGSI President Ishwinder Singh and Executive Committee Members from the Jaipur region of the Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry.

Held on 22nd April 2026 at Golden Cressida Resort & Palace, the gathering witnessed the participation of nearly 100 industry stakeholders from the natural stone industry, including processors, exporters, traders, machinery manufacturers and local business leaders from the region.

The event was not merely a felicitation ceremony, it emerged as an important platform for dialogue, networking, and grassroots industry connection, reflecting FIGSI's evolving vision of creating deeper engagement with stone businesses across every part of India.





Taking FIGSI Closer to the Industry

Over the years, India's natural stone industry has grown into one of the country's most globally recognized sectors, supplying granite, marble, sandstone, quartzite, slate, and engineered stone products to markets worldwide.

However, the industry also faces a rapidly changing environment shaped by global competition, sustainability expectations, logistics challenges, policy changes, labour dynamics, and technological transformation. In such a scenario, regional engagement has become more important than ever.

Under the leadership of Ishwinder Singh, FIGSI has increasingly emphasized the need to take the federation beyond major metropolitan centers and closer to the actual hubs where the industry operates.

FIGSI AT THE GRASSROOTS

The vision is simple yet powerful: to connect directly with businesses in their own regions, understand their local challenges, encourage participation, and build stronger industry unity from the grassroots upward. The Dudu meet stood as a strong example of this approach.

A Strong Response from the Industry
The strong turnout of around 100 industry members reflected the enthusiasm and positive response from the regional stone community.

The interaction also demonstrated how local federations and associations can play a vital role in strengthening industry participation and unity at the national level. FIGSI expressed its gratitude to the Dudu Industrial Federation for organizing the event and for bringing together the regional stone fraternity in such a meaningful manner.

Clockwise from top: FIGSI President Shri Ishwinder Singh welcomes Centre for Developmnet of Stones (CDOS) Vice Chairman Shri Deepak Ajmera; Former CDOS Vice Chairman and industry leader Shri Rakesh Gupta welcomed; Dudu Industrial Federation felicitates STONA 2027 Chairman Shri Hemanshu Sehgal. Below: FIGSI Executive Committee members from the region felicitated by the Dudu Federation. FIGSI President Shri Ishwinder Singh welcomes new FIGSI members from the Dudu industiral area.

HELLO LONDON

Stone & Surfaces Show, UK

FIGSI carves new ties in the UK

The Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry (FIGSI) marked a significant international presence at the Stone & Surface Show UK 2026, held in London in May 2026, reinforcing India's position as one of the world's leading natural stone destinations.

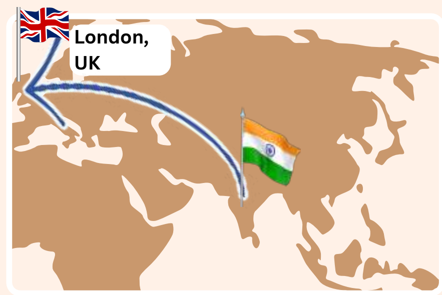
The participation served as an important platform for promoting Indian stones, strengthening global partnerships, and advancing the visibility of STONA 2027 among the international architecture and stone fraternity.

FIGSI's pavilion attracted strong interest from architects, designers, stone consultants, trade associations, and global event organisers, highlighting the growing global confidence in Indian stone craftsmanship, processing capabilities, and innovation. The delegation actively engaged with industry leaders from the UK, Europe, and Japan, discussing trends in stone applications, emerging finishes, sustainability, skill development, and international collaboration opportunities.

The event also saw encouraging engagement from internationally reputed architects and stone consultants who reiterated their preference for Indian stones in premium architectural and landscape projects.

Their feedback reflected the continued global trust in India's rich geological diversity, processing expertise, and ability to deliver large-scale customised solutions.

Mr Zaki Chakkiwala, Joint Secretary, FIGSI with Mr David Todd, Director of the Montgomery Group, organiser of Surface Design Show UK in Feb 27. He confirmed promotion of STONA in their event.



Landscape architect couple from UK-Japan, extensively work in Indian stones, confirmed participation to search new products, new finishes

Renowned architect & stone consultant, Ms Paola Blasi with Mr Zaki Chakkiwala, Joint Secretary of the Federation. Ms Blasi reaffirmed her preference for Indian stones in her projects and confirmed participation at STONA 2027 to look for new products & finishes.

Ms. Lucy Richardson, Liaison Officer, UK Stone Federation of 350 members has committed to collaborate with FIGSI to engage resources for mutual benefit.

STONA & THE WORLD | Barter Agreements

STONA 2027 accelerates global momentum with strategic alliances

CONTRACT TO EXHIBIT

Hemanshu Sehgal
Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry
No.429/7
12th Cross
Sadashivanagar
Bengaluru
560080
India

Tel. +91-80-23612541

S&S STONE & SURFACES SHOW

CONTRACT NO:	224916

Exhibition: The Stone & Surfaces Show 2026
Date of issue: 13/3/2026
Sales Person:

Hall	Technology	Product Area	Contra		
Stand No.	Square Metres	Dimensions (Metres)	Open Sides	Type of space	Full Price (GBP) / Stand Cost
A27	9	3 x 3	1	Shell Scheme	

Stand Specification	No. of Walls	Carpet	Ceiling	Fascia	Extras
	3	Yes	Yes	Yes	-

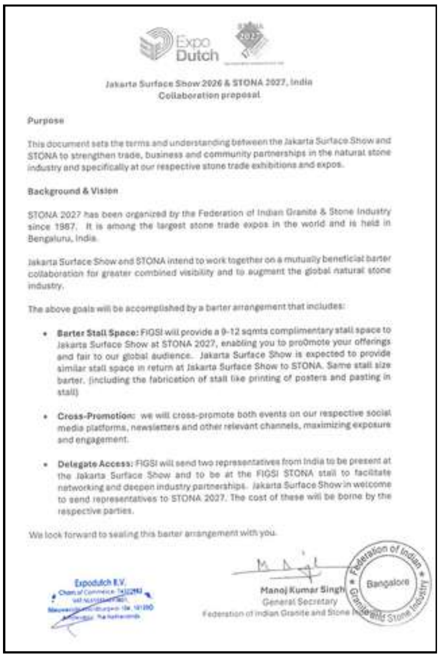
Description of Extras

Price (Ex VAT)		PAYMENT TERMS
VAT @ 0%	£ 0.00	
Public Liability and Property Indemnity	£ 200.00	
TOTAL (GBP)	£ 200.00	

Additional Notes

Company Entity: Limited / LLP ☐ Partnership ☐ Sole Trader ☐ Trade Association
Company: Co.Reg.No.:
FullName of Signatory: Hemanshu Sehgal Position of Signatory: Chairman, STONA 2027
Authorised Signatory: Date: 17.03.2026 Date

Registered in England No. 13127494 Vat No. 370504225



Expo Dutch

Jakarta Surface Show 2026 & STONA 2027, India
Collaboration proposal

Purpose

This document sets the terms and understanding between the Jakarta Surface Show and STONA to strengthen trade, business and community partnerships in the natural stone industry and specifically at our respective stone trade exhibitions and expos.

Background & Vision

STONA 2027 has been organized by the Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry since 1987. It is among the largest stone trade expos in the world and is held in Bengaluru, India.

Jakarta Surface Show and STONA intend to work together on a mutually beneficial barter collaboration for greater combined visibility and to augment the global natural stone industry.

The above goals will be accomplished by a barter arrangement that includes:

- **Barter Stall Space:** FIGSI will provide a 9-12 sqmts complimentary stall space to Jakarta Surface Show at STONA 2027, enabling you to pro0mote your offerings and fair to our global audience. Jakarta Surface Show is expected to provide similar stall space in return at Jakarta Surface Show to STONA. Same stall size barter. (including the fabrication of stall like printing of posters and pasting in stall)
- **Cross-Promotion:** we will cross-promote both events on our respective social media platforms, newsletters and other relevant channels, maximizing exposure and engagement.
- **Delegate Access:** FIGSI will send two representatives from India to be present at the Jakarta Surface Show and to be at the FIGSI STONA stall to facilitate networking and deepen industry partnerships. Jakarta Surface Show in welcome to send representatives to STONA 2027. The cost of these will be borne by the respective parties.

We look forward to sealing this barter arrangement with you.

Expodutch B.V.

Manoj Kumar Singh
General Secretary
Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry

STONA 2027

STONA 2027, India and Ceramics Vietnam and Stone Vietnam, Vietnam
Barter Agreement

Purpose

This document sets the terms and understanding between the Ceramics Vietnam and Stone Vietnam and STONA to strengthen trade, business and community partnerships in the natural stone industry and specifically at our respective stone trade exhibitions and expos.

Between, on one hand:

Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry (FIGSI), "STONA", No. 429/7, 12th Cross, Sadashivanagar, Bengaluru – 560080, India and also organizer of **"STONA 2027"** – 17th International Granite and Stone Fair to be held from 6th to 9th May 2027 at Bangalore International Exhibition Centre (BIEC), Bengaluru, India.

And, on the other hand:

MMI Asia Pte Ltd, (Messe München Regional HQ), 152 Beach Road, #02-07/07A, Gateway East, Singapore 189721 and also organizer of **"Ceramics Vietnam and Stone Vietnam 2026"** to be held from 17th to 19th June 2026 at Vigo, Spain.

Teams and Conditions

Party A (Ceramics Vietnam) agrees to provide Party B (FIGSI) with the following:

1. Logo mention on all collaterals featuring Media Partners, including the official website, social media platforms, onsite show directory, and event banners.
2. Social media announcement of the media partnership, featuring FIGSI and its platforms.
3. One (01) full-page advertisement in the online show directory available onsite.
4. One (01) fully furnished booth of 9 sqm at STONA 2027, including full booth fabrication and printing of digital graphics on panels.

In return, Party B (FIGSI) agrees to provide Party A (Ceramics Vietnam) with the following:

1. Sharing of press release articles on FIGSI's official website.
2. Party A logos on website as Media Partner
3. Three (03) Social media promotion on Facebook/ Linked in
4. 1 EDM introduction Ceramics & stone Vietnam (Party A can provide html)
5. One (01) fully furnished booth of 9 sqm at Ceramics Vietnam & Stone Vietnam 2026, including full booth fabrication and printing of digital graphics on panels.

The agreement is made on the following conditions:

1. This contra-deal is only for the promotion of your publication and company. No promotion of any other materials, activities or events will be allowed without prior permission from the organizer.

2. Distribution of promotional materials beyond the exhibition stand is prohibited.

3. Any exhibition/conference entity attached to your company or associated companies must be declared prior to the endorsement of this contract or MMI Asia Pte Ltd reserves the right to terminate this contract.

5. MMI Asia Pte Ltd reserves the right to reschedule Ceramics Vietnam 2026

6. No financial alternative is available for this contra-deal agreement

Executed, on:

Signature

Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry
Manoj Kumar Singh, General Secretary

Kathy Pham, Project Manager
MMI Asia Pte Ltd

STONA 2027 is rapidly strengthening its position as one of the world's most influential natural stone exhibitions, with the Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry (FIGSI) signing three strategic international barter and collaboration agreements that reinforce the event's expanding global footprint.

These partnerships signal growing international confidence in STONA 2027 and underline its emergence as a powerful global business platform for the stone industry.

Further amplifying its international outreach, STONA 2027 has established a collaboration framework with Jakarta Surface Show, focused on mutual visibility, delegate engagement, cross-promotion, and exchange initiatives.

The collaboration reflects a broader industry shift toward global integration and stronger cross-border business communities in natural stone and surface materials.

Adding to this international momentum, FIGSI is also strengthening STONA's visibility in Europe through participation and strategic exhibition positioning at leading international trade platforms, reinforcing STONA's ambition to connect markets, technologies, suppliers, architects, designers, and buyers under one powerful global umbrella.

As global demand for premium natural stone solutions evolves alongside advancements in sustainability, processing technologies, and architectural applications, industry events are increasingly becoming catalysts for business expansion and market transformation. STONA 2027 is positioning itself at the center of that movement.

Scheduled to take place from 6–9th May 2027 in Bengaluru, STONA 2027 is building a stronger international ecosystem for the future of stone trade. Every partnership signed today strengthens tomorrow's opportunity, bringing the stone community closer to one destination where business, innovation, and industry leadership converge.

SKILLING INITIATIVE

FIGSI Receives LoI from Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation for Youth Training Initiative

Shri N Ashoken, FIGSI Executive Committee member with Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC) representative.

The Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry has received a Letter of Intent (LoI) from the Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC) under the prestigious Vetri Nichayam Scheme, marking a significant step toward strengthening skill development and employment opportunities in the stone industry.

As part of the initiative, FIGSI has been approved as a Training Provider to impart relevant and emerging skill training programs for the youth of Tamil Nadu. The proposal submitted by FIGSI was examined and approved by the Technical Scrutiny Committee and Financial Scrutiny Committee of TNSDC, recognizing the federation's commitment to industry-led skilling and workforce development.

The program aims to equip young candidates with industry-relevant expertise, improve employability, and create stronger connections between training and job placement. The scheme also emphasizes monitoring, biometric attendance systems and placement support to ensure quality outcomes. This collaboration further reinforces FIGSI's long-standing vision of building a skilled workforce for the natural stone sector while supporting India's broader mission of employment generation and industrial growth. The initiative is expected to benefit aspiring youth and contribute significantly to the growth of the industry in Tamil Nadu and beyond.

Skill Centres for the Stone Industry

The Federation also champions skill development through initiatives such as Centres for Stone Excellence that have been setup exclusively for the stone industry to prepare a future-ready workforce aligned with modern industry.

Hosur
Tamil Nadu

Jaipur
Rajasthan

CURRICULUM PILLARS

- Quarrying
- CNC operation
- Machinery upkeep
- Stone trade
- Cutting & polishing
- Workshop safety
- Digital Marketing
- Accounting
- Stone startups

TAMIL NADU SKILL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

From
The Managing Director,
Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation,
8th Floor, CMRL Building,
Metros, Anna Salai, Nandanam,
Chennai – 600 035.

To
Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry
Federation of Indian Granite and Stone Industry "STONA", No.429/7,
12th Cross, Sadashivanagar,
Bengaluru, 560080

Rc.No. 2754/SDC-NMFS/2025, Dated: .2026

Sub: TN Skills - Vetri Nichayam - EoI Floated - Issuance of LoI - Regarding.

Ref: 1. EOI Ref: No: 02/STT-FS/2025, Dated: 06-07-2025

****

In reference to the 1st Cited, Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC) received applications to select suitable training partners to provide relevant and emerging courses to impart skill training and employability to the youth of Tamil Nadu under the Vetri Nichayam Scheme.

In this regard, you have submitted a proposal to train the youth of Tamil Nadu under the Vetri Nichayam program. The Technical Scrutiny Committee and Financial Scrutiny Committee of TNSDC have carefully examined the proposal and accorded approval for conducting the following training programs under Vetri Nichayam. The details of the courses approved and the training cost are enclosed in Annexure I.

Accordingly, this office is pleased to issue this Letter of Intent (LoI) for engaging your firm as a Training Provider to train the youth in the State of Tamil Nadu.

The other conditions (tentative only) for the proposed Training program are enclosed in the annexure-I, subject to TNSDC Norms.

The Norms for Payment will be,

- ✓ **30% Payment:** Upon completion of 10 days of training with 70% attendance per candidate. Payments will be made based on the actual number of candidates.
- ✓ **30% Payment:** Upon completion of the training program, assessments, and certification for the passed candidate count.
- ✓ **40% Balance Payment:** Upon successful placement and subject to verification of job placement. If the placement rate is above 80% full payments will be released or if the placement percentage falls between 60% and 80%, the T3 payment will be released on a pro-rata basis, considering the actual number of placed candidates.
    - For placement below 60%, No Payments will be made

Monitoring:

- The Aadhaar Enabled Biometric Attendance System (AEBAS) must be maintained by the Training Partners throughout the training period.
- The establishments have to ensure that the attendance system which should be reliable, secure, and capable of accurately recording daily attendance data.
- All attendance records should be securely stored for audit purposes and must be made available upon request to TNSDC.

Other Terms and Conditions:

- The Cost of the training given as Skill Vouchers to applicants/candidates will be reimbursed to Training Partners at each payment milestone.
- Training Partners should confirm their training details as in the format attached herewith, **Annexure II, duly signed and sealed**.
- Training Partners should submit the details of the curriculum with a split up of subtopics, with time allocation for each subtopic, with clear learning outcomes & assessment criteria.
- Training Partners will receive login credentials for the Vetri Nichayam program to enrol candidates and operationalise this program.
- Training Partners must follow all guidelines and instructions issued by TNSDC from time to time.
- Non-adherence to guidelines/ Violations/ Malpractices during the training program will result in blacklisting by TNSDC.
- The Training Partners have to organise placement drives, networking events, and recruitment drives to connect candidates with potential employers.
- Candidates/applicants will be issued "Skill Incentives" as DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer) to individual Bank Accounts by TNSDC upon achieving predetermined milestones fixed by TNSDC.
- Training Partners should not collect any fees or charges from trainees for skill training
- Training Partners to do branding activities for TNSDC by Small banners/ Flex Posters at the centre with TNSDC & Govt logo
- Training Partners will not be paid any claims or costs beyond the amount fixed by the TNSDC committee.

Subject to acceptance of the above-mentioned conditions and cost details mentioned in this Letter of Intent and annexure, confirmation is expected within 7 Working days from the date of receipt of this communication by affixing dated acknowledgement, failing which your firm will not be considered as a Training Partner under Vetri Nichayam program.

Sd/-

Managing Director

//Forwarded by Orders//

For Managing Director

FIGSI backs Indian industry at Construct Uganda Expo 2026, driving more global opportunities

As global construction markets shift toward emerging economies, the Construct Uganda Expo 2026 stands out as a powerful gateway into East Africa, further strengthened by FIGSI's role as a supporting partner, helping Indian businesses access and engage with this high-growth region.

Taking place from 21–23 May 2026 at the UMA Show Grounds in Kampala, the event brings together exhibitors and participants from many countries across the building materials, ceramics, construction machinery, and infrastructure sectors.

It serves as a dynamic platform to connect manufacturers, suppliers, developers, and decision-makers under one roof. With infrastructure development accelerating across East Africa, the timing is especially strategic. For Indian businesses, this presents a strong opportunity to expand exports and partnerships in a region where demand for cost-effective & quality construction solutions is rising.

FIGSI's partnership with the Construct Uganda Expo is aimed towards helping Indian companies benefit from stronger market access and trusted networks, opening doors to long-term growth in Africa's construction sector.

Geopolitics, Oil & Opportunity

Examining the future of the stone industry in times of global uncertainty

Every geopolitical crisis disrupts trade flows, but it also reshapes opportunities. The current tensions in the Gulf region and rising oil prices are once again highlighting how energy costs and shipping routes influence the global natural stone industry.

Quarrying, cutting, and transporting stone are energy-intensive processes, meaning volatility in fuel prices directly affects production costs and freight rates. The global natural stone market is estimated at roughly $37–43 billion in 2025 and is expected to grow steadily over the coming years as construction and infrastructure demand expands worldwide.

Asia-Pacific dominates consumption due to rapid urbanization and large-scale construction projects across emerging economies. Within this landscape, India remains one of the world's most important natural stone suppliers. The country holds vast reserves of granite, marble, sandstone, slate, limestone, and quartzite across many states.

India exports natural stone to more than 160 countries, with annual exports valued at approximately $1.3 billion. Granite exports alone account for roughly $700–770 million annually, while India also dominates the global sandstone market. However, geopolitical tensions in the Gulf region, the heart of global energy production, can affect the sector in multiple ways. Rising oil prices increase quarrying and transportation costs, while uncertainty in Gulf construction markets can slow demand in the short term. Exporters also face higher shipping costs and logistical delays.

Yet these disruptions often accelerate shifts in supply chains. Global buyers increasingly seek reliable and diversified sourcing hubs, and India's strengths lie in its resource diversity, established processing clusters, and mature export infrastructure.

For the Indian stone industry, the current moment calls for greater efficiency, technological modernization and upskilling, and value-added processing. Companies that invest in advanced cutting technologies, sustainability, and stronger global partnerships will be better positioned to navigate cost pressures while capturing new opportunities.

In times of geopolitical uncertainty, resilience becomes a competitive advantage, and India's natural stone sector is well positioned to play that role in the evolving global market.

Sources: *Mordor Intelligence Report, IMARC Stone Industry Review*, *Capexil Insights*

EXPERT VIEW

Rock science and lifecycle economics of stone temple construction

Dr A Rajan Babu
FIE, Former Principal Scientist & National Expert NIRM, Ministry of Mines, Government of India

Co-authors: Mr. R. Kiran Babu. B.E & Miss. R. Rubica Rani. B.E

Abstract
Stone temples represent one of the most durable structural systems developed in human civilization. Unlike reinforced concrete structures that depend on steel reinforcement and cementitious binders, traditional temples function primarily through compressive load transfer across interlocking stone blocks.

Their stability depends on lithological characteristics, rock mechanics behaviour, and architectural geometry. This paper presents a scientific framework for evaluating dimension stones used in temple construction through petrographic analysis, rock mechanics testing, quarry evaluation, and durability assessment.

Techniques such as ultrasonic pulse velocity testing, Schmidt rebound hammer testing, petrographic microscopy, and mineralogical analysis are discussed. In addition to structural performance, the lifecycle economics of stone temple construction are examined. Although initial construction costs may be higher than reinforced concrete structures, the exceptional durability of granite results in lower lifecycle costs due to minimal maintenance and very long service life.

A quality assurance framework based on ASTM and Indian Standards is proposed to ensure structural reliability and financial sustainability.

Highlights
- Granite temples demonstrate structural durability.
- Rock testing ensures scientific selection of construction stones.
- High compressive strength and low porosity enhance reliability.
- Stone temples exhibit lower lifecycle costs vs reinforced concrete
- Scientific evaluation improves structural & financial sustainability.

1. Introduction
Temple architecture demonstrates a unique integration of geology, structural engineering, and cultural heritage. Historic temples across India have survived for centuries despite environmental weathering, temperature variations, and seismic disturbances.

Structures such as the Brihadeeswarar Temple and Khajuraho temples illustrate the durability of stone construction systems. Traditional temples function primarily as compression-based structures. Instead of reinforced concrete members resisting tensile forces, temple structures rely on gravity and friction between interlocking stone blocks. The durability of these monuments depends largely on the intrinsic properties of the rock materials used. Modern temple construction increasingly incorporates scientific evaluation of stone materials to ensure structural safety and durability.

2. Lithological Suitability
Granite and other crystalline igneous rocks are regarded as the most suitable materials for temple construction due to high compressive strength, low porosity, and resistance to weathering. Granite consists primarily of quartz and feldspar with minor mica or hornblende.

The interlocking crystalline texture provides strong mechanical bonding and resistance to crack propagation. These characteristics make granite highly suitable for structures subjected primarily to compressive loading. Low water absorption further improves durability by limiting moisture infiltration and chemical weathering. Because temple construction relies heavily on stone-to-stone contact, uniform mineral composition and minimal internal defects are essential for structural stability.

3. Structural Load Transfer Mechanism
Stone temples function as gravity-dominated compression systems. Structural loads from the superstructure are transmitted vertically through successive stone elements as illustrated in Fig. 1.

Ancient stone temple architecture at Hampi. Photo: Canva

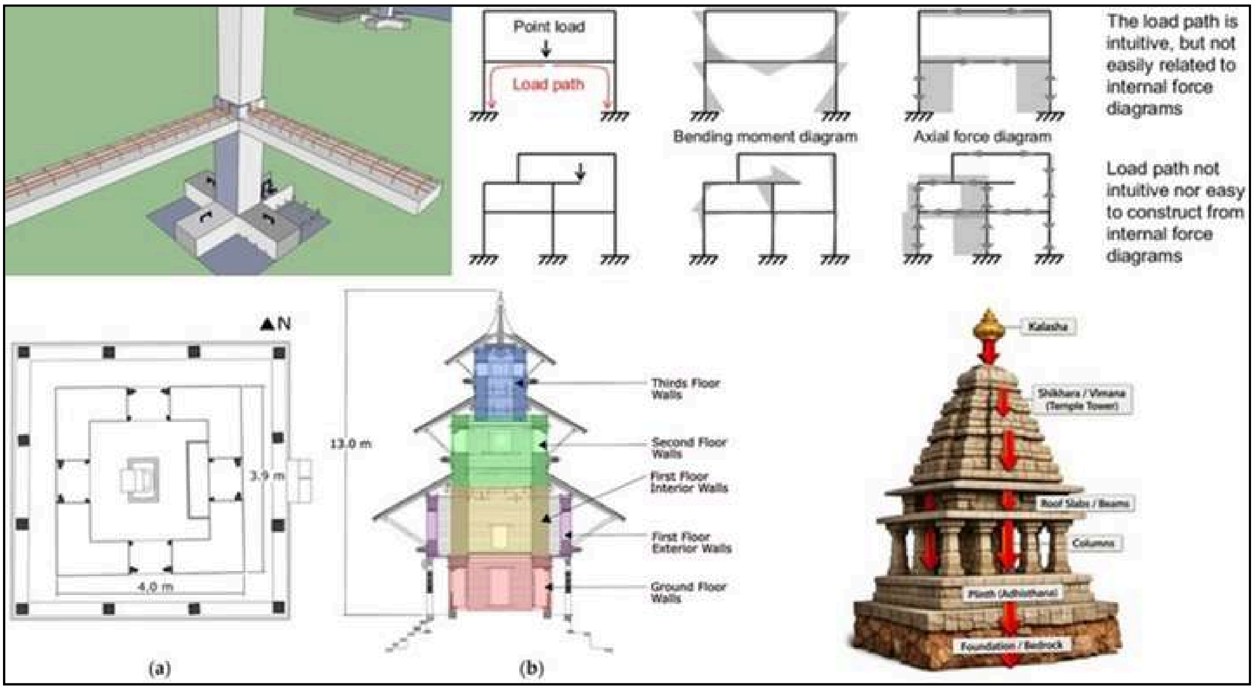


Fig. 1. Schematic representation of load transfer in a stone temple structure showing gravitational compression from the superstructure (shikhara/vimana) through roof slabs and columns to the plinth and foundation. The temple tower (shikhara or vimana) gradually tapers upward, directing loads downward through roof slabs and columns. Columns function as short compression members transferring loads to the plinth, which distributes stresses to the foundation.

Granite commonly exhibits compressive strengths exceeding 150–200 MPa, whereas stresses within temple columns are generally below 25 MPa. This large difference provides a high factor of safety and contributes significantly to structural stability.

4. Structural Components of Stone Temples

Traditional temples consist of several integrated structural elements. The foundation distributes loads safely to the ground. Above the foundation lies the plinth (adhisthana), which elevates the structure and protects it from moisture.

Columns (stambha) serve as primary load-bearing members supporting beams and roof slabs that form interior halls such as the mandapa. Walls provide enclosure while contributing to structural stability. The superstructure rises above the sanctum and gradually decreases in cross-section toward the top. The final element, the kalasha, locks the upper stones in compression and stabilizes the entire tower.

5. Scientific Evaluation of Temple Stones

Modern engineering practice recommends systematic testing of dimension stones used in temple construction.

Petrographic Analysis: Thin-section microscopy identifies mineral composition, grain size distribution, and microfractures.

Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity Testing: UPV testing evaluates internal stone integrity by measuring the velocity of ultrasonic waves.

Schmidt Rebound Hammer Testing: This test provides rapid estimation of surface hardness and approximate compressive strength.

Laboratory Testing: Standard procedures such as ASTM C170 (compressive strength), ASTM C97 (water absorption), and ASTM C880 (flexural strength) provide reliable indicators of stone quality. These methods ensure that only structurally sound stones are used in temple construction.

6. Quarry Evaluation

Proper quarry selection is essential for obtaining suitable dimension stones. Geological mapping identifies joint systems, weathered zones, and rock mass quality.

Blocks are typically extracted using diamond wire saws and controlled splitting techniques to minimize damage. Large blocks with minimal fractures improve structural integrity and reduce material waste. Correct orientation of blocks during extraction is also important because improper cutting may introduce microcracks that reduce mechanical strength.

7. Durability and Lifecycle Economics

Granite exhibits excellent resistance to environmental weathering, thermal fluctuations, and chemical attack. Durability tests involving wetting-drying cycles and temperature variations show minimal strength reduction. From an economic perspective, this durability offers major advantages. Reinforced concrete structures frequently require repair or rehabilitation within 50–70 years due to cracking and reinforcement corrosion. In contrast, well-constructed stone temples can remain structurally stable for several centuries.

The lifecycle cost trend for granite and reinforced concrete temple structures is illustrated in Fig. 2.

8. Lifecycle Cost Comparison

Table 1 summarizes the lifecycle performance differences between granite temple structures and reinforced concrete temple structures.

Parameter	Granite Stone Temple	RCC Temple
Initial construction cost	High	Moderate
Expected structural life	300–800+ years	50–75 years
Maintenance requirement	Very low	Moderate
Corrosion risk	None	High
Major repair requirement	Rare	Periodic
Lifecycle cost efficiency	Very high	Moderate

9. Proposed International Quality Control Framework

An international quality control framework for granite requires standardized evaluation of physical and mechanical properties in accordance with recognized standards such as ASTM C170 (compressive strength), ASTM C97 (water absorption and density), ASTM C880 (flexural strength), and ISRM suggested methods for rock characterization. Certified quarry selection, block inspection, and documented compliance with these standards ensure that only structurally reliable stone is approved for long-term construction use.

10. Conclusions

Stone temple construction represents a sophisticated integration of rock science, structural engineering, and architectural tradition. Granite's mineral stability, high compressive strength, and low porosity make it an ideal material for durable sacred structures. Scientific evaluation techniques including petrographic analysis, non-destructive testing, and laboratory strength testing provide reliable methods for assessing stone quality. When combined with proper quarry selection and precise construction practices, these techniques ensure long-term structural stability.

From a financial perspective, stone temples demonstrate clear lifecycle advantages. Although initial costs may be higher than reinforced concrete construction, the minimal maintenance requirements and extremely long service life make stone temples economically sustainable over extended periods.

Author Biography

Dr. A. Rajan Babu is a Former Principal Scientist and National Expert at the National Institute of Rock Mechanics (NIRM), Ministry of Mines, Government of India. He has extensive professional experience in rock mechanics, granite characterization, quarry evaluation, and structural applications of dimension stone. His work focuses on integrating geological science with traditional temple architecture and long-life stone engineering. Over several decades, he has contributed significantly to scientific evaluation methods for structural stone selection, durability assessment, and heritage-grade construction practices.

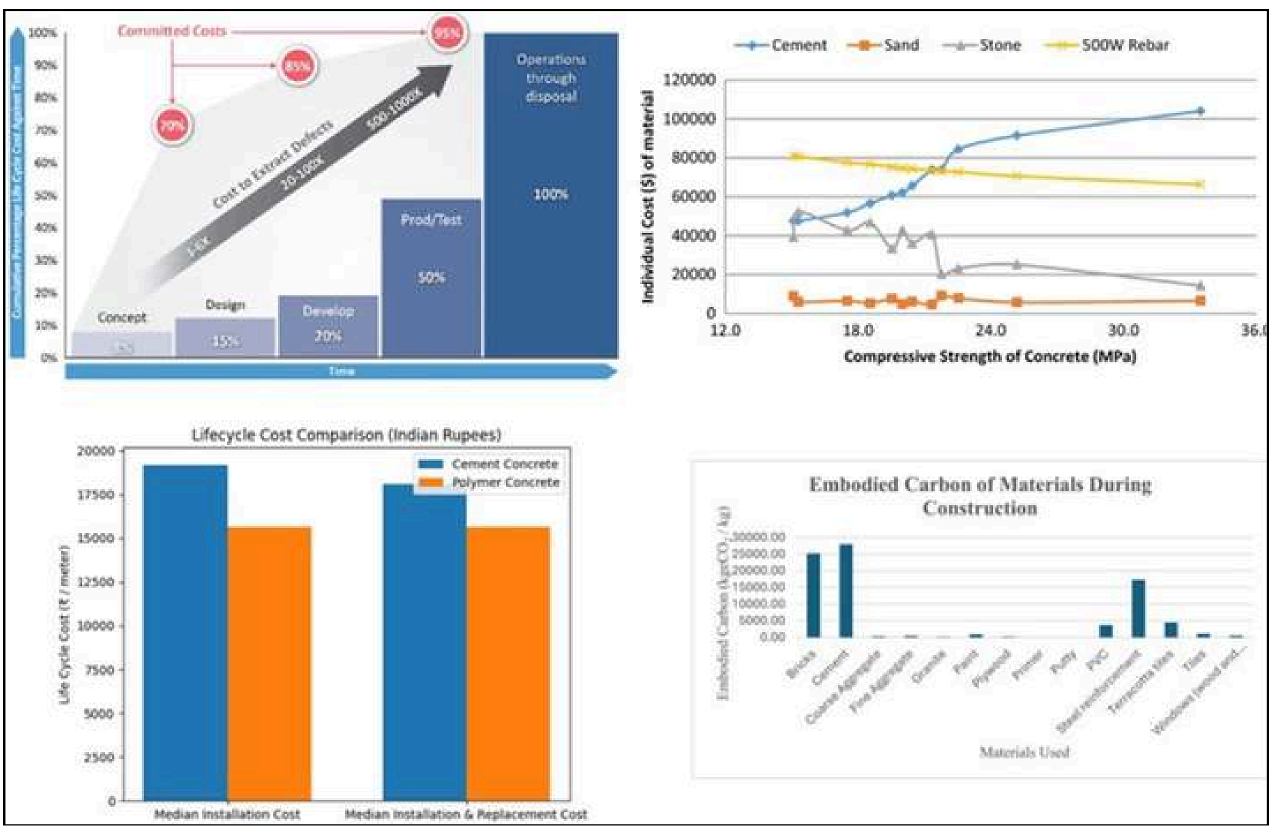


Fig. 2. Comparative lifecycle cost analysis of granite temple structures and reinforced concrete temple structures showing higher initial cost but lower long-term maintenance for stone construction.

KNOW YOUR STONES

Kadapa black takes center stage

Shri Purushotham, Executive Committee member, FIGSI and Chairman, FIGSI Telangana Sub Committee writes about the black limestone from Kadapa.

Introduction
Black Limestone, popularly known as Kadapa Black Stone or Napa Stone, is a natural sedimentary stone widely used in construction and infrastructure projects.

Renowned for its durability, elegant dark appearance, and cost-effectiveness, it has become one of the most preferred stones in both domestic and international markets.

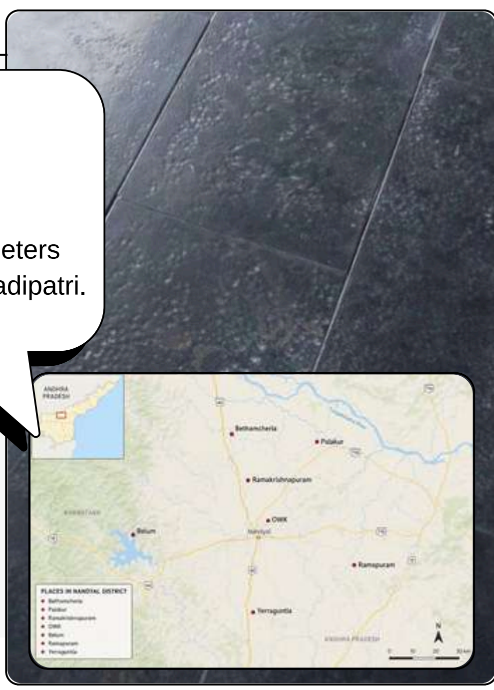
Origin and Availability Black Limestone is primarily sourced from YSR Kadapa District, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Cost Advantage
One of the key benefits of Black Limestone is its affordability. Since it is naturally available at the source location, extraction and processing costs are relatively low.

Compared to many imported stones, Kadapa Black Stone is significantly cheaper while maintaining excellent strength and durability. Due to its competitive pricing and easy availability, it is widely used in large-scale construction projects worldwide.

Conclusion
Black Limestone from the Kadapa region stands as a cost-effective, durable, and globally demanded natural stone.

With strong mining capacity, well-established processing infrastructure, and significant export volume, it continues to be a preferred material for major construction projects across India and abroad.



Where is Kadapa stone found?
The stone belt stretches approximately 100 kilometers from Bethamcherla to Tadipatri.

- Bethamcherla
- Palakur
- Ramakrishnapuram
- OWK
- Belum
- Ramapuram
- Yerraguntla

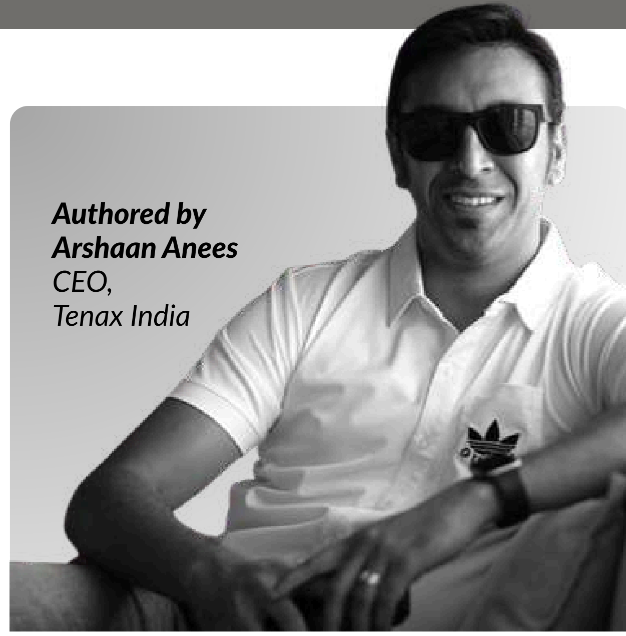
Industrial Capacity
- Around **650 mines** operate in the region.
- Approximately **550 MSME industries** are involved in the **Bethamcherla region**.
- Production: **2,100 tons per day**.
- Export capacity: **850 containers per month**.
- Bethamcherla alone has a peak handling capacity of around 100 containers per day.

Applications
- Flooring (Indoor and Outdoor)
- Wall Cladding
- Landscaping
- Pathways
- Large Infrastructure Projects
- Government and Commercial Buildings

Products and Finishes
- Natural Finish
- Machine-Cut Tiles
- Tumbled Finish
- Shot Blasted Finish
- Sand Blasted Finish
- Calibrated Stone
- Bush Hammered Finish
- Half-Honed Tumbled
- Honey Finish
- Cobble Stones Sizes Available
- Upto 7' × 2.5'
- Custom sizes as per requirements

STONE TECH

Faster, stronger, smarter: The rise of Epoxy UV

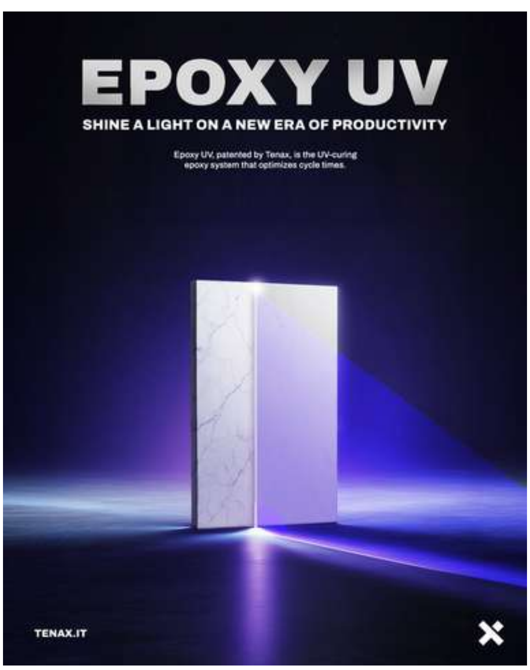


Authored by
Arshaan Anees
CEO,
Tenax India

Epoxy UV represents a new paradigm in slab treatment, offering a level of continuity between quarry, processing line, and finished product that the industry has never seen before. In a sector where quality, speed, and sustainability have become essential requirements rather than optional advantages, Tenax has developed a concrete solution rooted in years of listening to quarries and processing plants and transforming their daily challenges into industrial innovations.

Through the Tenax for Quarries project, the company has focused on maximising the value of the mountain by reducing waste caused by natural block defects, but it soon became clear that a downstream technology capable of converting this additional extractable material into market value was missing.

Epoxy UV was developed precisely to fill this gap. It is the first UV epoxy resin with hybrid catalysis designed specifically for natural stone, a patented two-component system that combines the stability, adhesion, and mechanical strength of traditional epoxy resins with the curing speed of UV technologies, shifting slab treatment from slow,



discontinuous cycles to a continuous in-line process.

By integrating a UV oven into the resin line, Epoxy UV allows the resin to penetrate deeply and consolidate cracks and micro-fractures, cure in a very short time, and move directly to polishing on the same working day, eliminating intermediate storage and significantly increasing throughput.
While the system reaches its full potential on dedicated plants, one of its key strengths is flexibility, with relatively simple upgrades, it can be integrated into many existing lines, making the transition accessible to factories of different sizes.

From a technical and aesthetic standpoint, Epoxy UV addresses some of the most persistent issues in slab treatment. It eliminates halos(oily lines) during polishing thanks to the synergy between formulation and curing process, ensuring a clean, uniform surface; it reconstructs defects following the natural veining of the stone, elevating the aesthetic standard of the finished slab; and it provides

deep consolidation and mechanical performance comparable to high-end epoxy systems, resulting in greater stability during handling, machining, and installation while reducing defects and claims.
These advantages are particularly valuable for premium marble, white materials, and stones traditionally considered difficult due to their defectiveness or sensitivity to standard epoxy cycles.

Epoxy UV also breaks the long-standing trade-off between quality and productivity. UV curing brings polymerisation to an industrial timeframe, enabling true same-day polishing and reducing production bottlenecks. Fewer intermediate steps, less handling, reduced storage space, and fewer reworks lead to lower overall processing costs and make it economically feasible to

treat materials that previously could not sustain discontinuous cycles due to low market value or colour sensitivity.

The line can be configured so that a slab enters as raw material and exits resin-treated, UV-cured, and polished, ready for quality inspection, a continuous flow that enhances delivery reliability and simplifies process planning.

From a sustainability perspective, Epoxy UV provides a tangible answer to the industry’s push toward more responsible production models. Being able to resin slabs that were previously excluded due to halos (oily lines), colour behaviour, or cost allows processors to increase the usable yield per block, reduce waste, and bring value to materials that once had no viable market. Meeting the same production demand with less extraction directly reduces environmental impact and supports more efficient use of natural resources. These improvements align perfectly with ESG expectations and the broader shift toward circularity and resource optimisation.

After the transformative introduction of epoxy resins in the 1990s, Epoxy UV stands as a new turning point for the stone industry. It brings coherence across the entire value chain, enabling processors to extract more value from what they quarry, operate with faster and more predictable production cycles, and achieve higher visual and structural quality in the final product. More than a new resin, Epoxy UV is an enabling technology that redefines the logic of slab treatment and sets a new benchmark for productivity, performance, and sustainability in the natural stone sector.

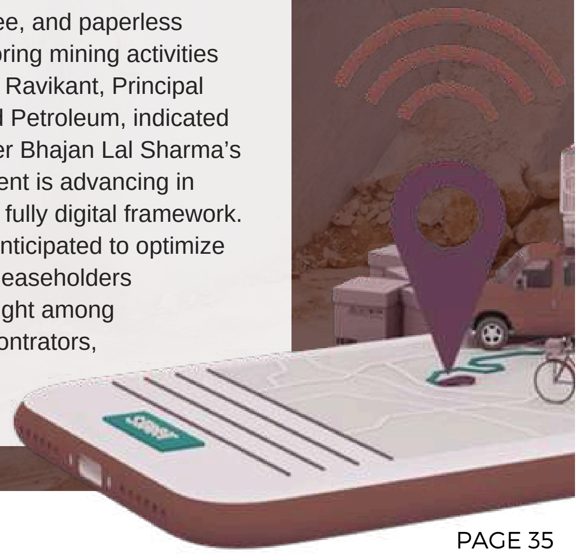
Rajasthan first state to launch pre-embedded auction of 8 major mineral blocks

Rajasthan has achieved a historic milestone in the mining sector. The state’s Mines and Geology Department had initiated the e-auction process for eight pre-embedded major mineral blocks of limestone in Bilara (Jodhpur). This makes Rajasthan the first state in the country to auction so many blocks simultaneously after obtaining the necessary permissions.

T.Ravikant, Principal Secretary of the Mines Department, stated that all necessary approvals for these blocks, such as mining plans, environmental permits, forest clearances, and other formalities, have already been completed. This initiative is a major step towards “ease of doing mining”.

Rajasthan aims to launch GPS and vehicle tracking for transparent mining operations

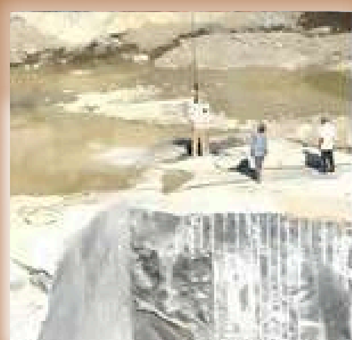
In a pivotal step towards enhancing transparency and embracing digital innovation, the Rajasthan Mines Department planned to introduce online weighing scales, vehicle tracking, and GPS monitoring systems in the mining sector. The initiative aims to foster a transparent, dispute-free, and paperless environment for monitoring mining activities throughout the state. T Ravikant, Principal Secretary of Mines and Petroleum, indicated that under chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma’s guidance, the department is advancing in phases to implement a fully digital framework. This online system is anticipated to optimize operations for mineral leaseholders while reinforcing oversight among leaseholders, royalty contrators, and the department.



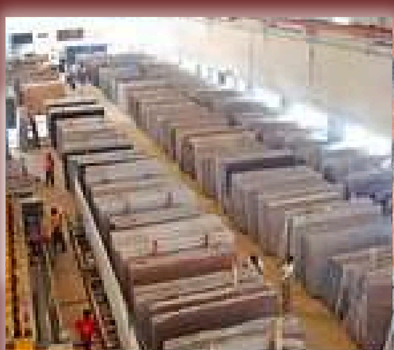
Stone industry pioneer since 1975

HJS Granites Pvt Ltd

Global clients love us for our winning combination of new-age technology, efficient staff and dedication to quality. Our use of environment-friendly granite processing machinery compliments our passion for high-grade stones and customer satisfaction.

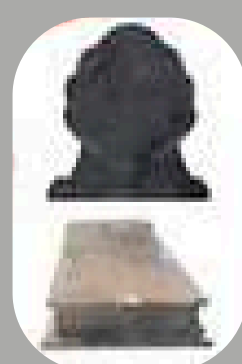
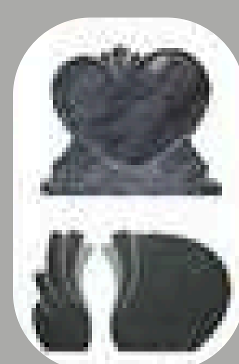



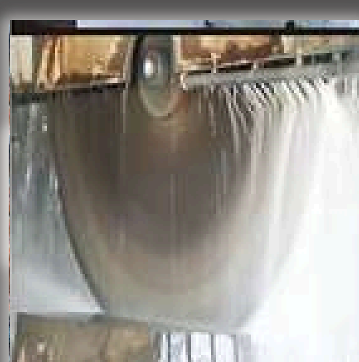
Quarries




Warehouse

Monuments plant

Gangsaw & vertical plant

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Scan this QR code to learn more.

INDUSTRY NEWS

Ministry of Mines introduces intermediate timelines to fast-track operationalization of auctioned mineral blocks

The Ministry of Mines has amended the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015, to accelerate the operationalisation of auctioned mineral blocks and improve accountability across the mining lease process.

Since the introduction of the auction regime in 2015, 585 major mineral blocks, including 34 critical mineral blocks, have been successfully auctioned. While auction activity has significantly increased in recent years, the government identified delays in converting auctioned blocks into operational mines. To address this, the amendment introduces clear intermediary timelines and monitoring mechanisms between the issuance of the Letter of Intent (LoI) and execution of the mining lease.

Under the revised rules, milestones such as mining plan approval, environmental clearance, execution of mining lease, and prospecting stages for Composite Licences (CL) must be completed within specified timelines. Delays attributable to bidders will attract penalties through appropriation of 1% of the bank guarantee for every month of delay. However, if the final milestone is achieved within the overall stipulated timeframe, earlier penalties can be adjusted against the auction premium, highlighting the government's focus on timely mine operationalisation rather than punitive enforcement.

The amendment introduces incentives for early production. In Mining Lease (ML) auctions, only 50% of the auction premium will apply to mineral dispatched before five years from the LoI date, while Composite Licences receive similar benefits for production before seven years. Performance security must now be submitted before LoI issuance, ensuring stronger bidder commitment. The rules also enable faster declaration of preferred bidders through the electronic auction platform and introduce measures to improve efficiency, discourage speculative bidding, and accelerate mineral production and sector growth.

Rising domestic demand powers growth

India's natural stone industry is witnessing strong momentum from rising domestic demand, driven largely by growth in construction, infrastructure, and luxury housing projects across the country. While exports remain important for the sector, the Indian market itself is increasingly becoming a major growth engine for marble, granite, quartzite, sandstone, and other natural stones.

Rapid urbanisation, premium residential developments, commercial spaces, hospitality projects, and high-end retail interiors are fueling demand for aesthetically appealing and durable natural stone products. Consumers today are more design-conscious and are willing to invest in premium materials for flooring, wall cladding, countertops, facades, and landscaping. This trend has significantly benefited stone processing hubs such as Kishangarh, Udaipur, Bangalore, Ongole, and Chennai.

Industry stakeholders also note that domestic demand is helping offset challenges in global export markets, including freight volatility, tariff pressures, and slower demand in certain international regions. Large infrastructure projects, airport expansions, smart cities, metro developments, and luxury villas are creating consistent opportunities for stone manufacturers and processors within India.

Experts believe that with continued growth in real estate and infrastructure, India's domestic stone market will remain a strong pillar for the industry's long-term expansion.

BUSINESS NEWS

Indian Stone Exporters Explore New Markets Beyond China & US

India's natural stone exporters are increasingly diversifying into emerging global markets as changing trade dynamics, tariff pressures, and fluctuating demand in traditional destinations such as China and the United States reshape export strategies. Industry players are actively expanding their presence in regions including Australia, Vietnam, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and parts of Africa, where demand for premium natural stone products continues to grow.

Exporters say international buyers are showing strong interest in Indian quartzites, granites, sandstone, and exotic marble varieties due to their competitive pricing, unique colours, and improving processing quality. With volatility in the Middle East, Australia and Southeast Asia are emerging as promising markets for high-end residential and commercial applications.

Sustainability is key competitive advantage in stone business

Sustainability is rapidly becoming a key differentiator in India's natural stone industry as global buyers increasingly prioritise environmentally responsible sourcing and production practices.

Stone processors, quarry owners, and exporters across India are investing in cleaner technologies, water recycling systems, solar energy, and waste management solutions to align with evolving international expectations.

Industry leaders believe sustainability is no longer only a compliance requirement but also a competitive business advantage. Many processing units are adopting advanced resin systems, energy-efficient machinery, and slurry recycling methods to reduce waste and improve operational efficiency. Quarry operators are also focusing on scientific mining practices, better resource utilisation, and land restoration initiatives.

Global architects, developers, and hospitality brands are increasingly seeking suppliers that can demonstrate responsible production standards and lower environmental impact. This shift is creating new opportunities for Indian companies that invest in ESG-focused practices and transparent supply chains. In addition to environmental benefits, sustainable operations are also helping businesses lower long-term production costs, improve productivity, and strengthen their positioning.

SNIPPETS

Skill development investments improving workforce productivity

Companies investing in workforce skill development are witnessing better productivity, improved operational efficiency, and higher employee retention. Businesses across manufacturing sectors are increasingly focusing on technical training, machine handling, safety practices, and digital process management to build a more capable and future-ready workforce.

Italian machinery exports to India see strong growth

Italian stone machinery exports to India witnessed significant growth as Indian processors continue modernising factories with advanced automation technologies. Demand for high-efficiency gang saws, CNC machines, polishing systems, and resin lines is increasing as companies focus on improving productivity.

Faster delivery becomes competitive advantage for businesses

Faster delivery timelines and reliable supply chains are emerging as major differentiators across B2B industries. Customers increasingly expect quicker turnaround times, consistent inventory availability, and dependable logistics support, pushing companies to invest in better planning systems, warehousing, and operational efficiency.

Rooftop solar adoption rises across manufacturing sector

Renewable energy adoption, particularly rooftop solar installations, is growing steadily among manufacturing units as businesses seek to reduce long-term operating costs and improve sustainability. Rising electricity expenses and increasing focus on ESG practices are encouraging industrial units to invest in captive solar solutions for factories, warehouses, and processing plants.

AI visualisation tools gain traction in design and material industries

AI-powered design visualisation tools are increasingly being adopted by architects, interior designers, and premium material brands to improve project presentations and customer engagement. Businesses are using AI-generated renders, virtual walkthroughs, and material simulations to help clients visualise spaces more accurately.

ECONOMY WATCH

Indian Economy in 2026: Resilient Growth, Structural Shifts Ahead

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India remains one of the fastest-growing major economies globally, driven by strong domestic consumption, infrastructure investment, and digital transformation. Despite global uncertainties, India's macroeconomic fundamentals remain relatively stable, with controlled inflation, steady GDP growth, and improving fiscal discipline.

India continues to stand out as one of the fastest-growing major economies in the world, with real GDP estimated at around 7.4–7.6% for FY26 and projections of 6.8–7.2% for FY27, according to domestic and global institutions.

Quarterly data show that growth has moderated slightly compared with the high-8% prints in earlier quarters, but the underlying story remains one of resilient expansion, driven primarily by domestic demand rather than external tailwinds.

The current economic environment reflects a balance of strong domestic momentum and emerging global risks, making India's growth story both resilient and dynamic.

Strong Growth Momentum

India's GDP is estimated to grow at around 7.5%–7.6% in FY 2025–26, supported by robust domestic demand, infrastructure spending, and a thriving services sector.

This positions India ahead of most major economies, reinforcing its role as a global growth engine.

Private consumption and government capital expenditure remain the primary drivers of growth, while manufacturing is gradually gaining strength under policy initiatives aimed at boosting domestic production.

Low Inflation with Emerging Pressures

One of the most notable trends has been relatively low inflation levels, with recent data showing inflation easing significantly during 2025 before stabilizing around moderate levels in 2026.

However, inflation risks remain, especially from:

- Food price volatility
- Rising global crude oil prices
- Supply disruptions due to geopolitical tensions

Key macro trends today

Output and growth path: India's real GDP grew at about 7.8% in Q3 FY26, down from around 8.4% in the previous quarter, but still well above the 6–7% range typical for most advanced economies. Over the past 12 quarters, growth has averaged roughly 7.3%, underscoring a stable, above-trend expansion.

Drivers of growth

The so-called "double-engine" model—private consumption and investment—remains the core driver. Retail sales, auto demand, and housing activity have held up, while private capex intentions in manufacturing, renewables, and infrastructure signal continued momentum.

Domestic demand and inflation

Household demand has proved remarkably resilient, supported by improving rural incomes, urban job growth, and a steady services-driven labour market. At the same time, retail inflation has remained low, with CPI averaging around 1.8% in FY26, reflecting soft food-price pressure and stable core prices.

Recent CPI rebasing has also shown that India is gradually "trading up" in its consumption pattern: food's weight in the consumer basket has fallen, while allocations to housing, transport, health, and services have risen, mirroring rising incomes and structural shifts.

External sector and policy environment

Exports have expanded at a healthy pace, helped by schemes such as RoDTEP and India's deepening trade partnerships with the EU, the UK, and select Asia-Pacific economies. The government's emphasis on bilateral trade agreements and domestic reforms—including GST-related simplification and manufacturing-linked incentives—has improved the medium-term outlook for trade and investment. Fiscal policy is being calibrated to support growth while containing the headline deficit, with continued focus on capex in infrastructure, energy, and digital connectivity.

Risks and outlook for the next year

Global uncertainties — such as geopolitical tensions, oil-price volatility, and the US tariff stance — remain downside risks, but India's relatively insulated domestic demand and strong policy buffers help cushion the impact. Looking ahead, economists expect growth to settle in the mid-6% to mid-7% band by FY27–FY28, with faster expansion in services, manufacturing, and formal-sector.

For businesses and investors, the key takeaway is clear: India's economy is not just growing fast—it is also transforming in structure and consumption, offering long-term opportunities in sectors like consumer goods, healthcare, digital services, and green infrastructure.

India's economy is growing strongly in 2026, with GDP likely around 6.6–7.4%, but several structural and external challenges could restrain both pace and inclusiveness of that growth. Listed below are the key challenges policymakers and businesses need to navigate this year.

Weak private investment and demand
Private corporate investment has remained stuck at around 12% of GDP for over a decade, with little sign of a robust revival cycle. Firms are hesitant to expand capacity because of excess industrial capacity, uncertain demand, and policy-implementation lags, which in turn limits job creation and productivity growth.

External risks: tariffs and global trade
India faces persistent US tariff pressures, including high-rate duties on some key exports, which have weighed on merchandise-export momentum despite diversification efforts. Sluggish global demand, trade frictions, and geopolitical disruptions (for example, via the Red Sea trade route and China's adjustment) increase the risk of export slowdowns and supply-chain volatility.

Public-finance and fiscal space
The government has kept spending high on infrastructure and welfare, which has supported growth but narrowed room for deeper capex or tax-rate cuts. Any slippage in tax revenues or unexpected spike in oil or subsidy bills could slow fiscal consolidation and raise borrowing costs, constraining investment over time.

Inflation and monetary-policy transmission
Although headline inflation is low (around or below 2%), core inflation has stayed above 4%, keeping the Reserve Bank cautious about faster rate cuts. At the same time, rate cuts are not fully transmitting to cheaper credit for small businesses and households, limiting the support for private demand and investment.

Labour and regulatory bottlenecks
Despite progress on labour-code reforms, implementation gaps and uncertainty around labour laws deter large-scale formal-sector hiring and factory-level expansion. Skill mismatches, rigidities in land acquisition, and delays in project approvals continue to hold back manufacturing and infrastructure projects that could drive higher-productivity jobs.
External-debt and balance-of-payments risks
India's external-debt-to-GDP ratio has been rising, with dollar-denominated borrowing expanding in recent years. If global risk-off episodes or interest-rate hikes return, a sharp currency fall or capital-outflow shock could strain the current-account deficit and foreign-exchange reserves.

Regional and sectoral imbalances
While services, urban consumption, and select states (for example, southern and western India) are growing quickly, rural demand and some central/eastern states remain weak, raising concerns about inclusive growth. Agriculture remains vulnerable to weather shocks and low-productivity farming practices, which can abruptly hit rural incomes and overall consumption. In short, the main challenge in 2026 is transforming high headline growth into broad-based, job-rich, and investment-driven expansion, while managing global shocks, fiscal constraints, and financial-stability risks. For 2027, most major institutions and the Indian government project India's GDP growth in the mid-6% to mid-7% range, rather than the high-7%+ seen in FY26. Base-case range for FY27 (2026–27).

Indian government (CEA/Economic Survey, new series): GDP growth is now forecast at 7.0–7.4% for FY27, reflecting stronger domestic demand, policy-reform momentum, and trade deals. The Chief Economic Adviser has indicated that outcomes may lean toward the upper end of this band (around 7.4%). EY and private-sector estimates: EY's Economy Watch and similar analytical reports also point to 6.8–7.2% real GDP growth for FY27, consistent with a "moderate but robust" expansion. Credit rating agencies: Moody's expects India to grow around 6.5% on average through 2027, while some other analysts see a mild moderation to about 6.4–7.1%, depending on global risks and external shocks.

What this implies

In practical terms, the consensus is that India's growth in 2027 will likely settle around 6.5–7.4%, slightly below the 7.4–7.6% seen in FY26 but still among the fastest in the world. The main risks are external (geopolitics, trade tensions, commodity prices), while the main upside comes from faster private-investment take-off and continued reforms. India's economy is on a strong growth trajectory supported by structural reforms, digital innovation, and infrastructure expansion. However, addressing inequality, employment challenges, and global uncertainties will be critical to sustaining long-term growth.

India's economy in 2026 reflects a compelling mix of strength and caution. While strong domestic fundamentals continue to drive growth, global uncertainties underline the need for resilience and strategic policy action. If current momentum is sustained, India is well-positioned to achieve its long-term ambition of becoming a global economic powerhouse.

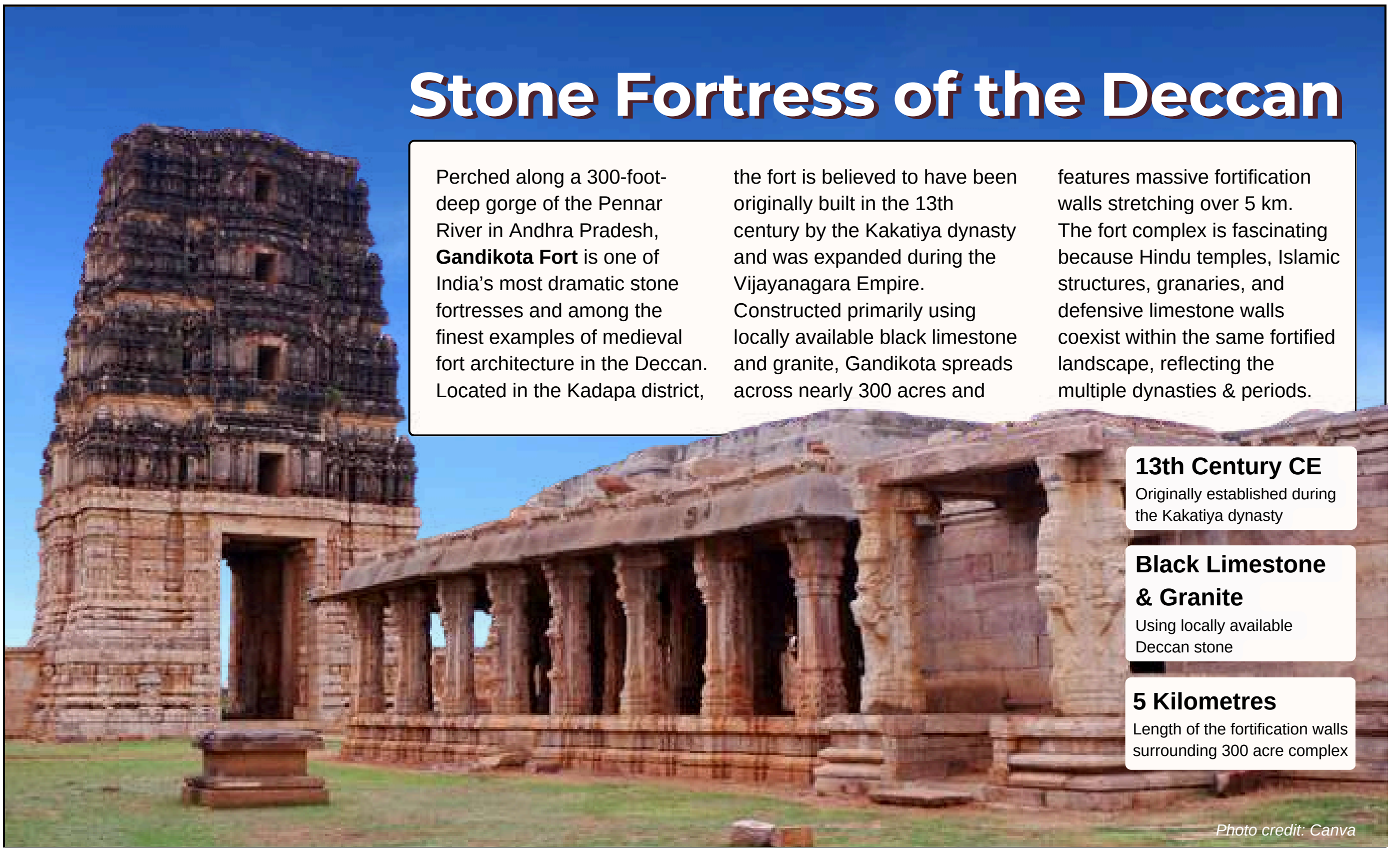
Obituary

Shri Guru Shastrimath
Passed away on 21st Feb 2026
Vice President, FIGSI

Smt. Satyawati Malhotra
Passed away on 5th Feb 2026
Wife of W/O Shri DC Malhotra
Member, FIGSI

Stone Fortress of the Deccan

Perched along a 300-foot-deep gorge of the Pennar River in Andhra Pradesh, **Gandikota Fort** is one of India's most dramatic stone fortresses and among the finest examples of medieval fort architecture in the Deccan. Located in the Kadapa district, the fort is believed to have been originally built in the 13th century by the Kakatiya dynasty and was expanded during the Vijayanagara Empire. Constructed primarily using locally available black limestone and granite, Gandikota spreads across nearly 300 acres and features massive fortification walls stretching over 5 km. The fort complex is fascinating because Hindu temples, Islamic structures, granaries, and defensive limestone walls coexist within the same fortified landscape, reflecting the multiple dynasties & periods.



13th Century CE
Originally established during the Kakatiya dynasty

Black Limestone & Granite
Using locally available Deccan stone

5 Kilometres
Length of the fortification walls surrounding 300 acre complex

Photo credit: Canva

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QUIZ TIME!!!

1. Which organisation represents the natural stone industry in India?
   a) FICCI b) FIGSI
   c) CII d) MSME India

2. Which machine is commonly used for polishing large stone slabs?
   a) Crane b) Gang saw
   c) Polishing line d) Compressor

3. What is the main purpose of resin treatment in stone processing?
   a) Increase stone weight b) Change colour
   c) Reduce block size d) Fill cracks

4. STONA is primarily known as?
   a) Quarrying method b) Global stone expo
   c) Stone machine d) Mining policy

5. Which safety equipment is most important while cutting stone?
   a) Helmet b) Safety goggles & mask
   c) Gloves d) Headphones

Answers
1. b) FIGSI; 2. c) Polishing line 3. d) Fill cracks; 4. b) Global stone expo; 5. b) Safety goggles & mask

Cover photo: Stone chariot at Hampi, Karnataka. Credit: Canva


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