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क्रमांक/जिव्याउके-कां/निर्यात/2026/1235  
प्रति,

उ. ब. कांकेर, दिनांक 31/07/2026

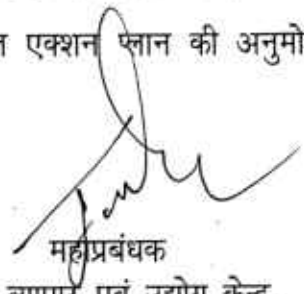
संचालक उद्योग  
(निर्यात कक्ष)  
उद्योग संचालनालय,  
उद्योग भवन, रिंग रोड नं.-1,  
जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.)

विषय:- राज्य में निर्यात संबंधी गतिविधियों के बेहतर क्रियान्वयन हेतु निर्यात संवर्धन समिति की बैठक दिनांक 13.04.2026 की कार्यवाही विवरण भेजने बाबत।

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उपरोक्त विषयांतर्गत राज्य में निर्यात संबंधी गतिविधियों के बेहतर क्रियान्वयन हेतु निर्यात संवर्धन समिति की बैठक कलेक्टर महोदय की अध्यक्षता में दिनांक 13.04.2026 को कलेक्टर सभाकक्ष में आयोजित हुई, जिसकी कार्यवाही विवरण एवं DGRFT से प्राप्त जिला निर्यात एक्शन प्लान की अनुमोदित प्रति संलग्न कर सादर प्रेषित है।

संलग्न :- उपरोक्तानुसार ।

  
महाप्रबंधक  
जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र,  
उत्तर बस्तर कांकेर (छ.ग.)

## कार्यालय, जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र, उत्तर बस्तर कांकेर

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क्रमांक/जिव्याउके-कां/निर्यात/2026/

उ.ब. कांकेर, दिनांक 29/07/2026

**विषय:-** राज्य में निर्यात संबंधी गतिविधियों के बेहतर क्रियान्वयन हेतु जिला निर्यात संवर्धन समिति की बैठक दिनांक 13.04.2026 का कार्यवाही विवरण।

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दिनांक 13.04.2026 को समय दोपहर 1:00 बजे कलेक्टर महोदय की अध्यक्षता में जिला निर्यात संवर्धन समिति की बैठक जिला कार्यालय कांकेर के सभाकक्ष में आयोजित किया गया। जिसमें वनमण्डलाधिकारी कांकेर, उप संचालक कृषि कांकेर, उप संचालक उद्यानिकी कांकेर, अग्रणी बैंक प्रबंधक भारतीय स्टेट बैंक कांकेर, प्रबंधक नाबार्ड, निदेशक खादी ग्रामोद्योग बोर्ड जिला पंचायत कांकेर एवं अन्य पदाधिकारी गण उपस्थित हुए। बैठक में महाप्रबंधक जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र द्वारा DGRFT से प्राप्त ड्राफ्ट एक्शन प्लान की जानकारी दी गयी। साथ ही व्यापार एक्शन प्लान के तहत पहचान किये जाने वाले निर्यात उत्पादों की जिला स्तर पर विभिन्न विभागों से जानकारी एकत्र कर जिला निर्यात प्लान को अंतिम रूप दिया गया।

महाप्रबंधक जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र कांकेर द्वारा निर्यात संवर्धन हेतु विभिन्न सेक्टरों पर आधारित उत्पादों का संवर्धन जिले में सुनिश्चित किये जाने हेतु DGRFT से प्राप्त जिला निर्यात एक्शन प्लान को कलेक्टर महोदय से अनुमोदन कराया गया।



महाप्रबंधक

जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र  
जिला उत्तर बस्तर कांकेर



कलेक्टर

जिला उत्तर बस्तर कांकेर



Government of Chhattisgarh  
Department of Commerce and Industries

District Export Action Plan

Uttar Bastar Kankey

(From pg. 01 to 31)

"Approved"

*[Signature]*

CCSE Kankey

*[Signature]*

Collector  
District - U.B. Kankey



# DISTRICT EXPORT ACTION PLAN



## KANKER



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## 1. District Profile

### 1.1 Introduction

Kanker district, located in the southern part of Chhattisgarh, occupies a strategic position between the central plains and the Bastar plateau. The district covers an area of 6,432 square kilometres, forming part of the Bastar division, and shares borders with Dhamtari to the north, Narayanpur to the west, Dantewada to the south, and Bijapur and Gadchiroli (Maharashtra) to the southwest. The district's administrative headquarters is situated at Kanker town, approximately 140 km south of Raipur on National Highway-30 (Raipur-Jagdalpur corridor), which connects the district to the state capital and to major trade routes extending toward Andhra Pradesh and Odisha.

Geographically, Kanker serves as a transitional zone where the fertile plains of central Chhattisgarh merge with the forested plateaus of Bastar. This location grants the district dual economic characteristics — agricultural productivity in the north and forest-based livelihoods in the south. The terrain is gently undulating, with extensive sal and teak forests, and is traversed by rivers such as the Mahanadi, Doodh, Hatkul and Kotri, which support agriculture, irrigation, and fisheries.

Culturally, Kanker has a strong tribal identity dominated by the Gond, Halba, and Muria communities. These communities preserve indigenous governance institutions, handicrafts, and agro-ecological knowledge that shape the district's development model. Kanker's local economy is deeply rooted in activities such as mining, subsistence agriculture, minor forest produce (MFP) such as tamarind, tendu leaves, mahua,

chironjee, and sal seeds, and in traditional handicrafts including bamboo work and metal craft.

The district has witnessed a gradual diversification of its economy over the last decade, with growth in small-scale industries, rural tourism, and horticultural cultivation (particularly mango, guava, and cashew).

### 1.2 Administrative Profile

Kanker district forms part of the **Bastar Division** and is administratively governed through seven tehsils and seven development blocks. The Collector and District Magistrate serve as the nodal authority for governance, assisted by sectoral officers in agriculture, industry, forest, rural development, and health.

#### Administrative Structure of Kanker:

- **District Headquarters:** Kanker
- **Area:** 6,432 sq. km
- **Sub-divisions:** Kanker, Bhanupratappur, Antagarh
- **Tehsils (7):** Kanker, Charama, Narharpur, Bhanupratappur, Durgukondal, Koyalibeda, Antagarh
- **Municipality:** 6
- **Villages:** 1005 (inhabited)



Kanker district falls under the **Kanker (ST)** Lok Sabha constituency and comprises **three Vidhan Sabha segments**: Kanker, Bhanupratappur, and Antagarh (all reserved for Scheduled Tribes).

The administrative framework of Kanker under the Collectorate and Tehsil offices provide strong base for development activities throughout the district

### 1.3 Location and Geography

Kanker lies between 20°06' to 20°24' North latitude and 80°48' to 81°48' East longitude. The district is positioned along the southern fringes of the Chhattisgarh plain, merging gradually into the Bastar plateau. The altitude ranges from 300 to 600 metres above sea level, with a subtropical monsoon climate.

The region receives an average annual rainfall of about 1,450 mm, largely concentrated between June and September. According to IMD data (2023), the district's temperature ranges from 13°C in winter to 42°C in summer, with high humidity during the monsoon

season. The Mahanadi, Kotri, Doodh and Turu rivers form the major drainage system, supporting minor irrigation schemes and fisheries.

Approximately 48% of Kanker's reported area for land utilization is under forest cover<sup>1</sup>, forming part of the Bastar-Dandakaranya forest belt. The forests are rich in sal, teak, bamboo, and tendu species and are home to diverse fauna, including leopards, deer, and sloth bears. The Kherkatta Reservoir and Dudhawa Dam (shared with Dhamtari) are key irrigation and tourism assets.

## 2. Demographic Profile

Kanker district, a part of the Bastar division is characterized by its predominantly tribal population and rich cultural heritage. According to Census 2011, the district has a population of around 7.48 lakh, with a balanced gender ratio and a predominantly rural demographic. Scheduled Tribes constitute nearly 55% of the total population, reflecting the deep-rooted tribal identity of the region. The major tribes include Gond, Muria, Halba, and Abhuj Maria, each with their own unique traditions, dialects, and social practices.

The cultural life of Kanker is vibrant, steeped in traditional music, dance, and rituals that are closely tied to the agricultural calendar and the natural environment. Folk dances like Gedi, Karma, and Panthi form an integral part of local festivals and celebrations. The district is also known for its craftsmanship in woodwork, bell-metal art, and bamboo products, which reflect the community's deep connection to the forest ecosystem. Despite gradual modernization, Kanker continues to preserve its indigenous traditions, languages, and community-based social structures, making it a living repository of Bastar division's tribal culture.

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<sup>1</sup> India State of Forest Report 2023, Volume II, Forest Survey of India



Image: Madal festival celebration in Kanker

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Kanker<sup>2</sup>

| Sl.no                                      | Indicators                 | Metrics                      |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Population Statistics (Census 2011)</b> |                            |                              |
| 1                                          | Total Population           | 748941                       |
| 2                                          | Males                      | 373338                       |
| 3                                          | Females                    | 375603                       |
| 4                                          | % of Urban population      | 10.2%                        |
| 5                                          | % of Rural population      | 89.8%                        |
| 6                                          | Population (0-6 age group) | 100099                       |
| <b>Sex Ratio</b>                           |                            |                              |
| 7                                          | Overall                    | 1006 females per 1,000 males |
| <b>Literacy Rate</b>                       |                            |                              |
| 8                                          | Overall                    | 70.29%                       |
| 9                                          | Male Literacy              | 69.19%                       |
| 10                                         | Female Literacy            | 52.65%                       |

<sup>2</sup> Census of India 2011, Kanker District Data

From Table 1, Kanker district, as per the Census of India 2011, had a total population of 748,941 persons, comprising 373,338 males and 375,603 females, with a sex ratio of 1,006 females per 1,000 males, higher than the state average of 991.

## 2.1 Social Composition

Kanker's population is predominantly rural, with nearly 89% residing in villages. The district is among the most tribal-dominated in central India, with Scheduled Tribes (STs) constituting approximately 56.3% of the total population, followed by Scheduled Castes (SCs) at 2.8%. The major tribal communities include Gond, Muria, Halba, and Abhuj Maria, who have historically been dependent on agriculture, shifting cultivation, and forest produce collection. Tribal institutions such as the *panchayat* and *ghotul* systems continue to play a critical role in local governance and resource management.

## 2.2 Literacy and Education

The district's overall literacy rate stands at 70.90%, higher than Bastar (53.15%) but slightly below the Chhattisgarh state average of 71.04%. Male literacy is around 69.19%, while female literacy trails at 52.65%, reflecting persistent gender gaps in education. However, recent expansion of government educational initiatives under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan and tribal residential schools has improved enrolment and reduced dropout rates.

Kanker hosts several secondary and higher education institutions, including the Government Polytechnic College (Kanker), Govt. Danteshwari Mahila Mahavidyalaya, and multiple Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs). Skill development under PMKVY and Mukhya Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana focuses on agro-processing, handloom, and forest produce-based crafts, aligning human capital with local resource potential.



### 3. Logistics Infrastructure Profile

Kanker's logistics framework forms a critical part of the **Raipur–Jagdalpur industrial and trade corridor**, serving as a connective link between the resource-rich Bastar region and the commercial hubs of central Chhattisgarh. The district's strategic location on **National Highway-30 (NH-30)** positions it advantageously for freight movement, agricultural marketing, and forest-produce transport. However, despite notable improvements under the **Chhattisgarh State Road Development Programme** and the **Central Road Fund (CRF)**, connectivity bottlenecks continue to constrain industrial growth and large-scale export activities.

#### 3.1 Road Transport

Kanker's transport backbone is defined by NH-30, which traverses the district from north to south, linking Raipur, Dhamteri, Kanker, and Jagdalpur. This highway serves as the main arterial route for movement of agricultural commodities, forest produce, and consumer goods. In addition to NH-30, the district is also served by State Highway-5 (SH-5) connecting Kanker to Narharpur and Bhanupratappur, and State Highway-6 (SH-6) linking Antagarh to Koyalibeda and the adjoining districts of Narayanpur and Dantewada.

The district has approximately<sup>3</sup>:

- 98 km of National Highways
- 212 km of State Highways
- 458 km of Major District Roads
- 1,245 km of Rural Roads under PMGSY

<sup>3</sup> Public Works Department, Govt. of Chhattisgarh

These road networks facilitate inter-block connectivity and movement of agricultural and MFP commodities from rural clusters to aggregation points. Recent road improvements under PMGSY-III have integrated over 300 habitations into all-weather connectivity, significantly improving access to markets and health facilities.

The Chhattisgarh State Warehousing Corporation (CSWC) is also developing roadside godowns near Charama and Bhanupratappur, intended for paddy and tamarind storage.

### 3.2 Air Transport

Although Kanker does not have its own airport, it benefits indirectly from the Jagdalpur Airport (130 km) and Raipur's Swami Vivekananda Airport (140 km), both accessible via NH-30. Maa Danteshwari Airport at Jagdalpur, operationalized under offers commercial flights to Raipur, Visakhapatnam, and Hyderabad, enhancing regional business mobility.

### 3.3 Railway Transport

Bhanupratappur Railway Station is the primary railhead in the Kanker district, situated 50 km from the district headquarters Kanker. The main line is being bridged through the Dalli-Rajhara-Rowghat-Jagdalpur railway line.

- The Dalli-Rajhara to Rowghat (95 km) segment is operational for freight.
- The Rowghat-Jagdalpur (140 km) stretch, passing through Bhanupratappur and Antagarh, is under advanced stages of completion.

Once complete, the corridor will connect the mineral belts of Dalli-Rajhara, Rowghat, and Bastar to **Visakhapatnam Port**, drastically improving export logistics for minerals, forest produce, and agro-commodities. Additionally, **Rowghat Railway Station**, located within Kanker district, will serve as a major freight loading hub, supporting both bulk commodities and containerized cargo.



### 3.4 Warehouses and Cold Storage

Warehousing and cold-storage infrastructure is becoming increasingly important in Kanker, where horticulture crops, and minor forest produce requires reliable facilities to reduce post-harvest losses and stabilise prices. The table below indicates warehouses registered in Kanker district

**Table 2: Active warehouses in Kanker**

| Sl.no | Location       | Capacity (MT) | Status |
|-------|----------------|---------------|--------|
| 1.    | Bhanupratappur | 7424          | Active |
| 2.    | Antagarh       | 1160          | Active |
| 3.    | Charama        | 15544         | Active |
| 4.    | Phakanjur      | 2567          | Active |
| 5.    | Narharpur      | 928           | Active |
| 6.    | Kanker         | 51690         | Active |
| 7.    | Pandripani     | 6264          | Active |

Source: Warehouse Development & Regulatory Authority

There is only one cold storage facility in Makdi Khuna, Kanker with a capacity of 5000 metric tonnes. The facility provides temperature controlled facilities to products like paddy, black gram, mahua, tori, charguthli, tamarind etc on a seasonal basis.



#### 4. Economic and Sectoral Overview

Kanker's economy represents a transitional structure between a agrarian base and a gradually diversifying resource-linked rural economy. Its dual dependence on agriculture and forest-based livelihoods defines the district's developmental priorities. While agriculture remains the backbone of employment, mining, minor forest produce and emerging small industries contribute significantly to non-farm incomes.

##### 4.1 Agriculture

Agriculture in Kanker is predominantly rainfed and smallholder-based, with **paddy** as the principal crop cultivated over nearly **1.10 lakh hectares**, accounting for about **68% of gross cropped area**. The **rabi** season is relatively weak due to limited irrigation coverage (about **22% of net sown area**), but pulses, oilseeds, and maize are cultivated across smaller patches. The tables below indicate area under cultivation and production figures for various agricultural commodities in the State.

**Table 3: Year wise rice production and yield during Kharif season in Kanker<sup>4</sup>**

| Sl.no | Year    | Area (Hectare) | Production (Tonnes) | Yield (Tonnes/Hectare) |
|-------|---------|----------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1.    | 2020-21 | 181,961        | 3,77,377            | 2.07                   |
| 2.    | 2021-22 | 192,160        | 2,86,207            | 1.57                   |
| 3.    | 2022-23 | 187,210        | 5,29,577            | 2.83                   |

<sup>4</sup> Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

**Table 4: Area, Production figures of Horticulture crops in Kanker, 2023-24<sup>5</sup>**

| Sl.no                | Crop             | Area (000 Ha) | Production (000 MT) |
|----------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| <b>A. Fruits</b>     |                  |               |                     |
| 1                    | Mango            | 2.279         | 11.395              |
| 2                    | Banana           | 0.550         | 13.799              |
| 3                    | Guava            | 0.785         | 6.673               |
| 4                    | Papaya           | 0.250         | 5.575               |
| 5                    | Aonla/Gooseberry | 0.110         | 1.351               |
| 6                    | Ber              | 0.125         | 2.100               |
| 7                    | Jackfruit        | 0.750         | 13.975              |
| 8                    | Limes & Lemons   | 0.350         | 2.111               |
| 9                    | Watermelon       | 0.125         | 1.406               |
| 10                   | Custard Apple    | 1.227         | 5.276               |
| 11                   | Muskmelon        | 0.120         | 1.062               |
| 12                   | Pomegranate      | 0.025         | 0.300               |
| 13                   | Other Fruits     | 0.654         | 2.956               |
|                      | <b>Total</b>     | <b>7.330</b>  | <b>67.868</b>       |
| <b>B. Vegetables</b> |                  |               |                     |
| 1                    | Tomato           | 1.250         | 16.875              |
| 2                    | Brinjal          | 1.210         | 19.150              |
| 3                    | Okra             | 1.000         | 10.000              |
| 4                    | Potato           | 0.500         | 5.775               |
| 5                    | Cabbage          | 0.530         | 8.984               |
| 6                    | Cauliflower      | 0.750         | 12.750              |
| 7                    | Onion            | 0.985         | 16.053              |
| 8                    | Leafy Vegetables | 0.200         | 1.320               |
| 9                    | Green Chilli     | 0.100         | 0.151               |
| 10                   | Pumpkin          | 0.300         | 3.360               |
| 11                   | Bitter Gourd     | 0.500         | 5.100               |
| 12                   | Bottle Gourd     | 0.610         | 10.100              |
| 13                   | Radish           | 0.300         | 4.980               |
| 14                   | Sweet Potato     | 0.200         | 1.774               |
| 15                   | Arbi / Colacasia | 0.060         | 0.861               |
| 16                   | Ridge/Sponge     | 0.210         | 1.411               |
| 17                   | Beans (All)      | 0.555         | 4.203               |
| 18                   | Pointed Gourd    | 0.150         | 1.677               |
| 19                   | Peas (Green)     | 0.200         | 0.920               |
| 20                   | Elephant Foot    | 0.555         | 5.495               |
| 21                   | Other Vegetables | 0.510         | 3.111               |
|                      | <b>Total</b>     | <b>11.460</b> | <b>147.021</b>      |

<sup>5</sup> Chhattisgarh Agriculture Department – Horticulture Statistics Report 2023-24

|   |              |              |               |
|---|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 6 | Other spices | 0.453        | 3.636         |
|   | <b>Total</b> | <b>2.166</b> | <b>14.919</b> |

The district's agro-climatic conditions are suitable for diversification into **horticulture, vegetables, and minor fruits**, especially in northern Kanker and Charama blocks. Mango, Banana, Jackfruit, Tomato, Onion, Brinjal, Okra, Cauliflower etc are the highest grown crop varieties in Kanker

#### FPOs in the District

Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) in Kanker have emerged as an important institutional mechanism for improving the bargaining power and market access of small and tribal farmers in the district. Built largely around paddy, minor forest produce, and horticulture crops, these FPOs help aggregate produce, reduce input costs, and enable collective marketing—functions that are particularly valuable in a district dominated by small landholdings and forest-based livelihoods. In recent years, government support through NABARD, the Agriculture Department, and various central schemes has strengthened their organisational capacity, introduced basic value-addition facilities, and linked a few groups to larger mandi and institutional buyers. While most FPOs in Kanker are still in early stages of maturity and face constraints such as limited managerial skills, inadequate working capital, and inconsistent access to markets, they hold significant potential to enhance farmer incomes, diversify cropping patterns, and integrate forest-dependent communities into more formal and resilient value chains.

#### Challenges:

- Fragmented holdings
- Low irrigation coverage
- Limited access to formal credit and crop insurance
- Post-harvest losses (8–12%) due to weak cold-chain capacity

### 4.2 Agro-Processing Landscape in Kanker

Kanker's agro-processing landscape is shaped by its strong base of cereals, minor millets and forest-based resources, offering scope for scalable value addition. Under the Districts as Export Hubs (DEH) framework, Kanker's identified product basket includes rice, kodo-kutki millets, maize, lac and selected minor forest produce (MFPs), all of which lend themselves to primary and secondary processing such as cleaning, grading, dehulling, parboiling, flaking, roasting and value-added packaging. Under ODOP, the district focuses on millet-based products and processed forest produce, aligning with national priorities for nutri-cereals and natural-product value chains.

Agriculture in Kanker is dominated by food crops, with paddy, maize and small millets forming the core of the district's kharif production. The district also has an established base for horticultural crops—papaya, mango, banana, vegetables (tomato, brinjal, gourds, chillies) and spices such as turmeric and ginger—as reported in the state's horticultural statistics. These raw-material streams collectively provide a reliable supply line for processors and support diversification into ready-to-cook millet mixes, fortified flours, roasted snacks, dehydrated vegetables, spice powders and bottled pulp. The commissioning of the millet processing unit at Nathia Navagaon has further strengthened the district's capacity for structured procurement and value addition, creating an anchor for FPO/SHG-led supply chains.

Given Kanker's predominantly agrarian economy, value addition through low glycaemic index paddy varieties, high protein value added rice assumes high potential. This along with fruit and vegetable processing, strengthening warehousing, packhouses and primary processing at the block level can significantly reduce post-harvest losses and stabilise farmer incomes. With rising demand for nutrition based ready to eat / ready to cook meals, natural products and niche rice varieties in global markets, Kanker is positioned to scale export-oriented processing.

#### 4.3 Industry profile

The industrial profile of Kanker is in very nascent stage, with almost all industrial area chosen for industries vacant and underdeveloped. The sporadic presence of smaller rice milling units and other processing zones, mining units around towns of the district is the main stay of industry in Kanker. Cluster formation for industries is very limited in the district. The tables below indicate an overview of industrial sector in Kanker.

**Table 5: Industrial Area in Kanker**

| Sr. No | Name of Industrial Area | Land acquired (In hectare) | Land developed (In hectare) | Vacant plots |
|--------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| 1      | Makrikhuna              | 7.07                       | -                           | 49           |
| 2      | Nathiya Navagaon        | 3.04                       | -                           | 26           |
| 3      | Lakhanpuri              | 53.98                      | -                           | 53.98        |
|        | Total                   | 64.09                      | -                           | 64.09        |

Source: DIC, Kanker

**Table 6: Industrial Profile of Kanker**

| Sr. No | Category                                                                    | No. of Units |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1      | Registered Industrial Units                                                 | 510          |
| 2      | Registered Medium & Large Unit                                              | NA           |
| 3      | Estimated average number of daily worker employed in small scale industries | NA           |
| 4      | Employment in Large & Medium Industries                                     | NA           |

|   |                            |      |
|---|----------------------------|------|
| 5 | Overall employment         | 2858 |
| 6 | Number of Industrial Areas | 01   |

Source: DIC, Kanker, Ministry of MSME

The table below provides details of existing micro and small enterprises and artisan units in Kanker:

**Table 7: Micro & Small Enterprises in Kanker**

| Sr. No | Type of industry                 | No. of Units | Employment |
|--------|----------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| 1      | Agro Based                       | 95           | 663        |
| 2      | Ready made garments & embroidery | 48           | 133        |
| 3      | Wood/wooden based furniture      | 34           | 162        |
| 4      | Paper & Paper products           | 29           | 68         |
| 5      | Chemical/ Chemical Based         | 03           | 49         |
| 6      | Rubber, Plastic & petro based    | 02           | 9          |
| 7      | Mineral based                    | 13           | 215        |
| 8      | Metal based (Steel fab)          | 80           | 286        |
| 9      | Repairing & servicing            | 57           | 138        |
| 10     | Others                           | 300          | 1030       |

Source: DIC, Kanker, Ministry of MSME

#### 4.4 Minerals

Kanker district hosts several minerals of economic significance, including iron ore, bauxite, gold, nickel, and soapstone, alongside substantial deposits of sand, murrum, ordinary stone and brick clay. The district's mineral administration currently encompasses 13 mining leases, 16 quarry leases and 2 temporary permits, indicating a modest but diversified extractive footprint. Additionally, 50 sand quarries have been leased along various riverbanks; of these, 8 are operational, while the remaining quarries are shortlisted and pending environmental clearances.

Mining activities are geographically concentrated in the Kanker, Charama, Narharpur and Bhanupratappur tehsils, reflecting the distribution of accessible deposits and existing infrastructure. A total of 36 sand quarries have been allotted on the riverbeds of the Mahanadi, Doodh, Bande, Hatkel, Sodure, Khandi and Kotri rivers, enabling local supply of construction-grade sand, subject to regulatory compliance.

In FY 2018–19, the district generated approximately ₹74.98 crore in royalty from major minerals and ₹1.57 crore from minor minerals, underscoring the importance of mineral revenues to the district's resource base. Strengthening environmental compliance, promoting scientific mining practices, and improving monitoring systems will be essential for ensuring sustainable resource utilisation and increasing revenue certainty while balancing ecological considerations.

#### 4.5 Minor Forest Produce

Minor Forest Produce (MFP) forms a central pillar of the rural and tribal economy in Kanker district. The district's extensive mixed deciduous forests support a diverse range of MFPs, and for many Scheduled Tribe households, these products provide between a quarter and nearly half of their annual income. MFP collection not only sustains household consumption during lean agricultural months but also enhances food and nutritional security. Kanker is among the state's most productive MFP zones, with tamarind, harra, bahera, amla, mahua flowers and seeds, chironjee, karanj and kusum seeds, tendu leaves, sal seeds, lac, honey, hill broom grass and several medicinal plants contributing significantly to livelihoods and local trade. These products are channelled through an established institutional framework comprising the Chhattisgarh State Minor Forest Produce Federation, primary forest produce cooperatives and Van Dhan Vikas Kendras, which together manage procurement, aggregation, primary processing and market facilitation. The table below lists the cooperatives in Kanker district associated with collection and marketing of minor forest produce.

**Table 8: Block wise distribution of cooperative societies for MFP in Kanker**

| Sl.no | Block          | Number of Cooperatives |
|-------|----------------|------------------------|
| 1.    | Antagarh       | 18                     |
| 2.    | Bhanupratappur | 21                     |
| 3.    | Charama        | 3                      |
| 4.    | Durgkondal     | 7                      |
| 5.    | Kanker         | 5                      |
| 6.    | Koyalibeda     | 39                     |
| 7.    | Narharpur      | 9                      |

Source: Kanker District – Potential Linked Credit Plan 2025-26, NABARD

The table below indicates harvest statistics for Minor Forest Produce in Kanker.

**Table 9: Harvest statistics for MFP in Kanker 2024-25**

| Sl.no | Product      | Harvest Season      | Quantity (Standard Bags) |
|-------|--------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.    | Tendu Leaves | April - June        | 188082                   |
| 2.    | Kusumi Lac   | June-July & Dec-Jan | 920                      |
| 3.    | Rangeeni Lac | Oct-Nov & April-May | 78                       |
| 4.    | Sal Seed     | May - June          | 15000                    |
| 5.    | Tamarind     | March-April         | 10573                    |

Source: Chhattisgarh PM Gati Shakti Databank

#### 4.6 Government Initiatives to Promote Industry

The Government of India and the Government of Chhattisgarh has undertaken a range of initiatives to promote industrial development in Kanker, recognising the district's

potential in agro-based processing, minor forest produce, and mineral-linked industries. A major thrust has been on improving basic infrastructure through upgraded road connectivity, reliable power supply and the development of industrial growth centres in and around Kanker and Charama to attract micro, small and medium enterprises. The state has streamlined land allotment procedures through the Chhattisgarh Industrial Development Corporation, enabling quicker approvals and single-window facilitation for entrepreneurs seeking to set up units in sectors such as food processing, forest-produce processing, metal fabrication and rural manufacturing.

The government has also placed special emphasis on leveraging Kanker's rich agricultural and forest resources. Under various state-level policies, incentives are provided for setting up tamarind, amla, mahua and sal-seed processing units, along with financial support for cold chains, warehousing and primary processing infrastructure. Van Dhan Vikas Kendras and SHG-based producer groups have been strengthened to transition from raw produce collection to value-added enterprise activity, thereby feeding into local industrial ecosystems. In parallel, schemes such as the Chief Minister's Food Processing Scheme and PMFME have been extended to promote small agro-allied units, offering subsidies, training and access to credit.

To enhance the ease of doing business, the state has operationalised a digital single-window platform that integrates registrations, approvals and compliance requirements, reducing procedural delays for new and existing industries. Skill development centres operated through department-led programmes and the Kaushal Vikas Yojana equip local youth with training in trades such as welding, fitting, food processing, packaging, logistics and electrical work, aligning the local workforce with industry demand. In addition, financial incentives including capital subsidies, interest rebates, SGST reimbursements and support for technology upgradation have been extended under the Chhattisgarh Industrial Policy to encourage investment in backward districts like Kanker.

The government has also prioritised cluster-based development by promoting small manufacturing hubs, handloom and handicraft clusters, and mineral-based micro-industries that draw on local resources. Ongoing efforts to strengthen connectivity with Raipur, Durg, Jagdalpur and major national highways aim to improve market access, reduce logistics costs and integrate Kanker with larger industrial corridors. Collectively, these initiatives reflect a strategic approach to transforming Kanker into a competitive destination for small and medium-scale industries, generating employment, promoting local entrepreneurship and strengthening the district's economic resilience.

#### 4.10 Agricultural Export Profile of Kanker

Exports from Kanker is limited to parboiled rice over the past years.. The table below provides a snapshot of the top export destinations of parboiled for the year 2024-25.

**Table 10: Destinations of parboiled rice exported from Kanker, 2024-25**

| HS Code  | Product        | Top Markets                            | Export Value (INR million) |
|----------|----------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 10063010 | Parboiled Rice | Benin, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Mozambique | 101.99                     |

Source: DGCIS

There is immense potential for value addition of parboiled rice to fortified and low glycaemic index varieties strengthened with high protein nutrition of rice which fetches highest premium upto USD 1700 / quintal in global markets





### 5. SWOT Analysis – Kanker

Kanker's economy is transitioning from a primarily subsistence-based system to a diversified rural production landscape. With its rich natural resources, forest base, and growing institutional ecosystem, the district stands at a critical juncture where targeted interventions can convert latent potential into sustainable export-led growth.



#### Strength

1. Diverse agro-climatic conditions suited for paddy, millets, and horticultural crops.
2. High forest cover (47%) providing a strong base for Minor Forest Produce (MFP).
3. Strong institutional presence — FPOs, Van Dhan Kendras, and functional cooperatives network.

#### Weakness



- Low irrigation coverage (22%) limits productivity.
- Weak industrial and logistics infrastructure.
- Fragmented supply chains with limited aggregation capacity.



#### Opportunity

- Global demand for millets, organic rice, herbal products, and eco-crafts.
- Public investments in the Rowghat-Jagdalpur rail corridor and Bhanupratappur Mini Food Park.
- Expansion of PM-FME and PMEGP schemes enabling local entrepreneurship.

#### Threat



- Climate variability and rainfall dependence affecting yields.
- Out-migration of skilled youth due to limited local employment opportunities.
- Over-extraction and unsustainable forest collection practices leading to resource depletion.



## 6. Kanker – Export

Kanker's current export basket is narrowly concentrated, with parboiled rice constituting the district's sole significant outward-bound commodity, primarily shipped to markets in Africa. This mono-commodity export structure reflects both the strong paddy production base of the district and the absence of a diversified agri-processing ecosystem. However, the sector's inherent strengths position Kanker for a substantial expansion of export-oriented value addition. The district's rice varieties are well-suited for processing into differentiated products such as low-glycaemic index (GI) rice and fortified rice blends, which are gaining traction in global health-conscious consumer segments.

Given the growing international demand for convenience foods, Kanker also holds considerable potential to develop a portfolio of ready-to-cook and ready-to-eat products, including healthy breakfast mixes, instant porridges, millet-rice blends, and minimally processed meal bases. Furthermore, rice bran—presently an underutilised by-product—offers a promising pathway into high-value nutraceuticals and functional foods. Rice bran oil, gamma-oryzanol, dietary fibre supplements, and antioxidant extracts represent viable export-grade products that can be manufactured with strategic investment in modern milling and extraction facilities. By nurturing food processing clusters, strengthening quality certification infrastructure, and facilitating market linkages, Kanker can transition from exporting a single low-value commodity to building a diversified, higher-value agro-processing export portfolio that aligns with emerging global trends in health, nutrition, and convenience foods.

### 6.1 High Potential Products of Kanker District

Kanker district, possesses a strong agrarian base, significant minor forest produce, and an emerging food-processing ecosystem. While its export portfolio is currently limited, the district's combination of high-quality paddy, rich forest resources, and a growing interest in health-oriented value-added foods positions it well for future expansion under the District as Export Hub (DEH) initiative. With global demand rising for sustainable, functional, and nutritionally enhanced products, Kanker can leverage its natural strengths to diversify into high-value agri-food, nutraceutical, and forest-based exports. Table 11 below outlines high-potential export products from the district.

**Table 11: Potential Export Products from Kanker**

| Products                                                                  | Rationale for Export Potential                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Value-Added Rice Products (Low GI Rice, Fortified Rice, Specialty Blends) | Kanker's strong paddy production base makes it ideal for transitioning from raw rice exports to value-added formats. Global markets increasingly prefer low glycaemic index, fortified, and specialty rice blends due to rising health awareness and dietary shifts. Fortified rice program for aid support in Africa, dynamic markets in the Middle East, and health-conscious markets in Europe offer significant demand. |
| Ready-to-Eat (RTE) / Ready-to-Cook (RTC) Breakfast and Meal Products      | With growing international demand for convenient and nutritious food options, Kanker can develop instant porridges, rice-millet mixes, and healthy breakfast formulations. The district's rice and minor millets can be positioned as clean-label, gluten-free, and minimally processed foods targeted at Asian, African, and diaspora markets.                                                                             |
| Rice Bran-Based Nutraceuticals and Functional Foods                       | Rice bran and by-products—currently underutilised—offer high-value opportunities such as rice bran oil, gamma-oryzanol, antioxidants, fibre supplements, and protein-rich extracts. Rising global focus on plant-based nutraceuticals, functional ingredients, and preventive health makes this a strong candidate for export-oriented processing.                                                                          |
| Minor Forest Produce (Tamarind, Mahua, Chironji, Lac, Hill Grass)         | Kanker's forests yield a variety of non-timber forest products with established domestic demand and growing international applications in natural food ingredients, beverages, herbal formulations, and confectionery. With proper grading, processing, and certification, these can access niche markets in Southeast Asia, the EU, and the US.                                                                            |
| Processed Spices (Chilli, Turmeric, Coriander)                            | The district cultivates key spices that have strong export demand. By promoting cleaned, ground, dehydrated, and value-added spice products, Kanker can tap into global markets seeking authentic, chemical-residue-free Indian spices, especially in the Middle East and South Asian diaspora markets.                                                                                                                     |

|                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Handicrafts<br>(Woodwork, Bamboo<br>Craft, Tribal Artefacts) | Kanker's traditional bamboo and wood crafts, though lesser-known than Bastar's Dhokra, have growing potential in eco-friendly home décor and sustainable lifestyle segments. Increasing global appreciation for handmade, natural-material crafts provides entry into boutique and fair-trade markets in Europe and North America. |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## 6.2 Strategy to Increase Exports from Kanker

Kanker district, with its strong agricultural base, significant minor forest produce, and emerging potential in value-added food processing, is well-placed to evolve into a competitive agro-based export hub in Chhattisgarh. Although its current export basket is limited to parboiled rice, Kanker has the foundations necessary to diversify into high-value categories such as low-glycaemic index rice, nutraceutical ingredients, ready-to-eat (RTE) and ready-to-cook (RTC) foods, processed spices, and sustainably sourced forest products. To unlock this potential, the district requires a structured roadmap that enhances infrastructure, builds technical capabilities, and strengthens market linkages. The following phased strategy outlines short-, medium-, and long-term interventions to accelerate Kanker's export readiness and strengthen its contribution to India's trade ecosystem.

### Short-Term Strategy (0–2 year)

#### 1. Infrastructure & Logistics Readiness

- i. **Export Facilitation Cell in Kanker:** District Industries Centre (DIC)–Kanker may facilitate the establishment of an Export Facilitation Cell to coordinate with DGFT, APEDA, MPEDA, Spices Board, and EPCs, acting as a single-window support system for exporters.
- ii. **Strengthening Connectivity:** Improve last-mile road connectivity from key rice belts and MFP-producing clusters to NH-30 and NH-43 to reduce cargo handling time and expedite movement to major ports such as Visakhapatnam, Paradip, and JNPT.
- iii. **Common Warehousing for Grains & MFP:** Facilitate creation of small-scale warehousing and scientific storage units for paddy, rice, spices, tamarind, and lac near Kanker, Charama, and Bhanupratappur to improve product holding capacity and reduce post-harvest losses.

#### 2. Skill Development

- i. **Exporter Awareness Drives:** Organize district-wide training on export documentation, packaging norms, sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards, GI requirements, and pre-shipment inspections.

- ii. **Skill Mapping:** Conduct mapping of rice millers, SHGs, FPOs, MFP collectors, and spice growers to identify enterprises with potential for export-oriented scaling and certification.

### **3. Training for Farmers & Entrepreneurs**

- i. **Farmer Training for Crop Diversification & Quality Standards:** Introduce training in GAP, residue-free cultivation, organic farming for spices, and quality compliance for rice meant for low-GI processing.
- ii. **Entrepreneur Workshops:** Train local MSMEs and SHGs on value addition in rice (fortified rice, low-GI processing), bran-based nutraceutical extraction, and ready-to-cook breakfast mixes.
- iii. **Digital Traceability Onboarding:** Facilitate FPO/SHG onboarding onto APEDA systems such as HortiNet and GrainsNet; encourage adoption of QR-code based traceability for niche rice and nutraceutical products.

### **4. Marketing & Promotion**

- i. **Exporter Helpdesk:** Establish the Export Facilitation Cell as a one-stop desk for documentation support, packaging norms, buyer queries, and certification assistance for rice, MFP, and nutraceuticals.
- ii. **District-Level Buyer Engagement:** Organize local trade fairs showcasing Kanker's value-added rice, spices, and forest-based products to domestic buyers, e-commerce platforms, and institutional buyers.
- iii. **Brand Promotion:** Develop district-level branding for value-added rice (e.g., Kanker Low-GI Rice), forest products, and healthy food mixes to position Kanker as a source of clean-label, nutrition-rich foods.

### **Medium-Term Strategy (3-5 years)**

#### **1. Infrastructure Expansion**

- i. **Processing Centres for RTE/RTC Foods and Spices:** Establish dedicated processing hubs for low-GI rice milling, extruded breakfast products, spice cleaning and grinding, dehydration, and MFP processing (tamarind, mahua, chironji).
- ii. **Quality Labs & Testing Units:** Promote NABL-certified testing facilities for GI, pesticide residues, aflatoxins, moisture levels, and nutraceutical component testing to ease compliance for exporters.

- iii. Improved Rail-Linked Logistics: Utilize and augment connectivity to major railway points in Kanker and Bhanupratappur to efficiently move bulk rice and processed foods to Raipur for containerization.

## **2. Skill & Technical Capacity Building**

- i. Export-Oriented Training Institutes: Collaborate with IIFT, APEDA, and EPCH for specialized export training programs in Kanker.
- ii. Producers may be trained in packaging innovations and shelf-life enhancement techniques that are compliant with international markets such as European countries, Middle East, Southeast Asian countries.
- iii. This can be facilitated by collaborating with NIFTEM / schemes under MoFPI.
- iv. Launch women-led processing units with dedicated training on entrepreneurship and export finance (this can be facilitated by tying-up with NABARD, SIDBI).
- v. Prepare, strategize and deploy ICT-based traceability systems to ensure transparency in agro supply chains.

## **3. Marketing and Trade Linkages**

- i. District Export Product Catalogue: Curate a catalogue for Kanker showcasing low-GI rice, nutraceuticals, spice powders, and tamarind-based products; onboard sellers on ONDC, AgriBazaar, GeM, Amazon Global, and Flipkart Export.
- ii. Industry-EPC Coordination: Use the Export Facilitation Cell to bridge gaps between producers and EPCs such as APEDA, FIEO, and Spices Board for deeper market access.
- iii. Unified Export Branding: Develop branding like "Kanker Naturals" or "Kanker Health Foods" for value-added foods and nutraceuticals.
- iv. Trade Fair Participation: Facilitate participation of Kanker producers in Dubai Expo, GulfFood, Africa Food Manufacturing Expo, and SIAL Paris for targeted market exposure.

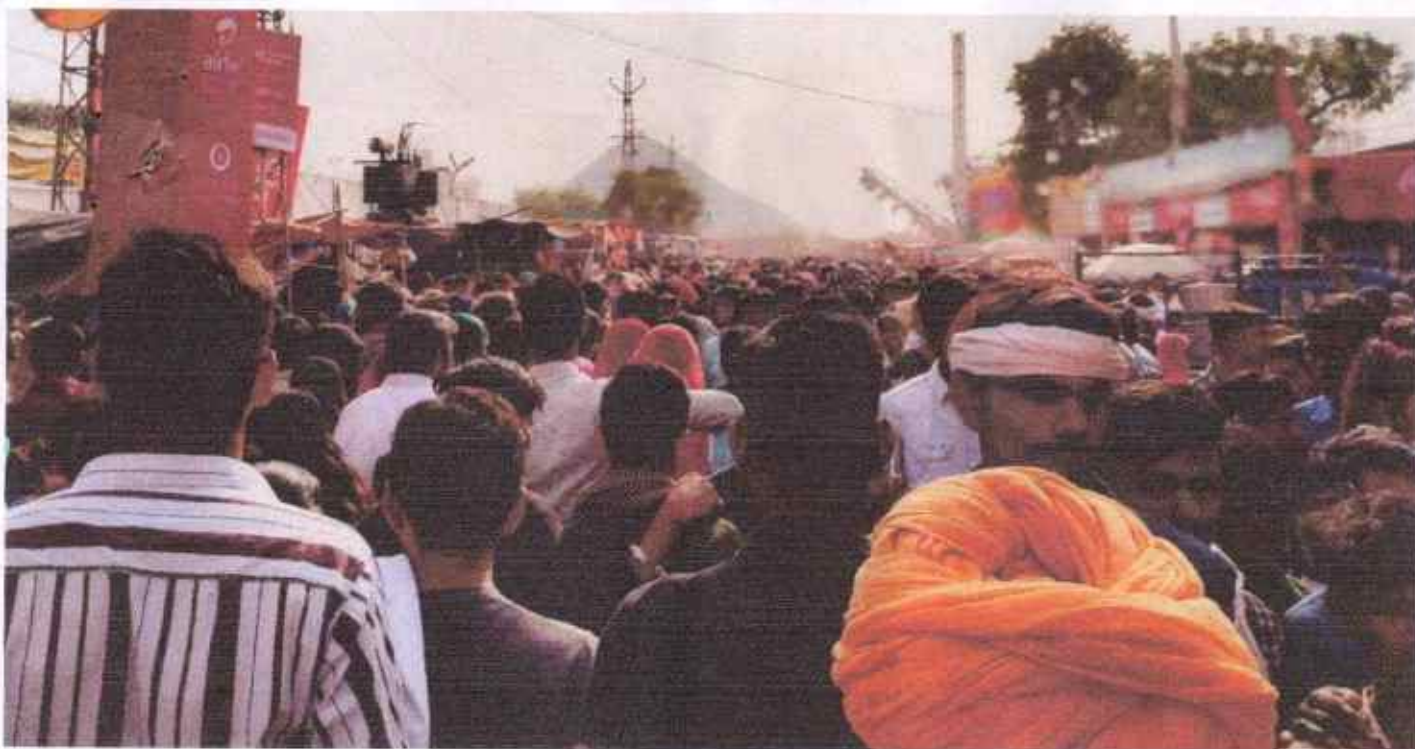
## **6.4 Financial Incentives & Policy Support**

- i. Unlocking Kanker's export potential requires a targeted financial and policy support framework that aligns with the district's strengths in value-added rice, nutraceuticals, spices, and minor forest produce. The Chhattisgarh Industrial Policy 2024-30 already extends a wide range of incentives—including capital investment subsidy, transport subsidy, technology-upgradation assistance, and SGST reimbursement—which can be calibrated to address Kanker's export-specific needs. Given the district's emerging niche

in low-glycaemic index rice, fortified rice, RTE/RTC foods, and bran-based nutraceuticals, policy instruments may prioritise support for modern milling technologies, extrusion units, nutraceutical extraction lines, and packaging innovation. The policy's provisions for R&D units and export-related expense reimbursement can be particularly valuable for rice mills, processing units, and FPO-led enterprises seeking to develop globally compliant, science-backed nutrition products. Skill development efforts focused on export compliance, SPS standards, residue-free cultivation, food safety audits, and international packaging norms will strengthen Kanker's workforce and enable micro-enterprises to meet global market requirements.

ii. National schemes can be leveraged to accelerate infrastructure creation, enterprise scaling, and market access for Kanker's export-oriented sectors. Product clusters in rice milling, nutraceuticals, spices, and MFP processing stand to gain from public-private partnerships (PPPs) for establishing integrated packaging centres, cold storage, warehousing, and quality labs. Further, the One District One Product (ODOP) and PMFME schemes may be strategically integrated with export promotion to scale up Kanker's signature product categories—particularly value-added rice and tamarind—by supporting branding, capacity building, and market development.

iii. Strong institutional facilitation is critical to operationalize these interventions and create an enabling ecosystem for exporters. The District Export Promotion Committee (DEPC) must anchor coordination between line departments, industry stakeholders, certification bodies, and financial institutions. A dedicated Export Facilitation Cell within the District Industries Centre (DIC)—Kanker can serve as the district's export helpdesk, guiding enterprises on scheme applications, export documentation, regulatory compliance, packaging standards, international certifications (HACCP, ISO 22000, GlobalGAP), and export finance. Closer coordination with railway and highway authorities, CONCOR, APEDA, Spices Board, and leading banks will help build the logistics and financial infrastructure required to support large-scale export operations. With a cohesive blend of financial incentives, alignment with national export schemes, and strong district-level handholding, Kanker can evolve from a single-commodity exporter into a diversified agro-processing and nutraceutical hub, driving inclusive, high-value economic growth across the district.



## 7. Challenges and Recommendations

Kanker district possesses considerable potential to emerge as a competitive agro-processing and value-added food export hub; however, several structural and operational challenges must be addressed to unlock this potential. A primary constraint is the district's limited export-grade infrastructure. Although Kanker is a major paddy-producing district, inadequate scientific warehousing, the absence of modern value-added rice processing units, and negligible facilities for nutraceutical extraction restrict the district's ability to produce globally compliant low-glycaemic index rice, fortified rice, and bran-based products. Cold chain infrastructure, particularly for perishable minor forest produce (MFP) such as tamarind and chironji, remains insufficient, leading to post-harvest losses and restricting shelf life for international markets. While NH-30 provides critical connectivity to Raipur and Visakhapatnam ports, the district lacks integrated logistics hubs, pack houses, and quality testing laboratories essential for establishing Kanker as an export-ready node within the region.

Another central challenge is the limited awareness of global export norms among rice millers, FPOs, SHGs, and small entrepreneurs. Many enterprises continue to rely on traditional processing and packaging methods that do not meet international food safety standards. Lack of exposure to requirements such as HACCP, GlobalG.A.P., ISO 22000, BRCGS, and residue-free certification undermines access to premium markets, especially for low-GI rice, nutraceutical ingredients, and value-added RTE/RTC products. Similarly, inadequate knowledge of branding, modern packaging, consumer trends, and digital traceability systems prevents producers from leveraging the rising global demand for clean-label, plant-based, and functional food products. Limited value addition—such

as converting rice bran into fibre supplements, tamarind into concentrate, or spices into dehydrated extracts—further restricts the district from tapping higher-value market segments.

Marketing limitations compound these challenges. Despite growing global interest in health foods and sustainable forest produce, Kanker's products remain underrepresented in trade fairs, export expos, and e-commerce marketplaces. Without district-level branding—for instance, "Kanker Low-GI Rice" or "Kanker Naturals"—producers cannot command premium pricing or recognition. SHGs and FPOs also face barriers in accessing affordable credit needed for technology upgrades, compliance audits, and packaging improvements. Although the State Warehousing Corporation is exploring the creation of additional storage capacity, a significant gap continues to exist between the current scientific storage availability and the district's total requirement across rice, spices, and MFPs. To bridge this gap, DIC may facilitate the development of cold storage, modern godowns, and integrated pack houses equipped with grading, sorting, and pre-cooling facilities for processed food and RTE/RTC segments.

At the same time, these challenges present an opportunity for strategic transformation. Establishing dedicated agro-processing clusters for low-GI rice, nutraceuticals, and spices; promoting an integrated food processing park; and encouraging the development of Integrated Pack Houses can ensure adherence to global quality standards. Capacity-building programmes in partnership with APFNA, Spices Board, NARARD, NIFTM, and EPCs can enable producers to upgrade skills in packaging, branding, certification, and e-commerce exports. Digital platforms such as ONDC, Amazon Global, and AgriBazaar offer new avenues for market access. Financial support under the Chhattisgarh Industrial Policy 2024–30—combined with central schemes such as PMFME, ODOP, and TIES—can be leveraged to incentivize technology adoption, encourage export-compliant units, and build shared infrastructure.

The DEPC at Kanker should also conduct a thorough assessment of export potential products and chart out most cost efficient logistics corridor to nearest ports, detailing the State Highways, National Highways, congestion points, road quality etc across the route map.

By tackling these constraints through a coordinated, forward-looking approach, Kanker can transition from a district dependent on a single commodity to a diversified, high-value export ecosystem. This transformation will not only enhance rural incomes and employment but also position Kanker as a model district in India's rising health-food and nutraceutical export landscape—where traditional strengths evolve into globally competitive opportunities.



## 8. Conclusion

Kanker district, though endowed with a strong agricultural base and rich forest resources, is still at a nascent stage of industrial and export development. At present, the district's export profile is narrowly concentrated, with parboiled rice being the only significant commodity shipped to international markets—primarily through intermediaries located outside the state. The absence of large-scale processing units, modern milling technologies, nutraceutical extraction facilities, and value-addition clusters constrains Kanker's ability to participate meaningfully in high-value export markets. Limited scientific storage, inadequate cold chain infrastructure, and the lack of integrated pack houses further restrict the district's potential to upgrade from raw commodity exports to processed, globally compliant food products.

Despite substantial paddy production and abundant minor forest produce such as tamarind, chironji, mahua, and lac, most agricultural and forest-based outputs continue to be sold in raw or minimally processed form. This restricts the district from capturing value in emerging segments such as low-glycaemic index rice, fortified rice blends, RTE/RTC breakfast products, rice-bran nutraceuticals, dehydrated spices, and processed MFP-based foods. While NH-30 provides essential connectivity to Raipur and Visakhapatnam port, the district lacks dedicated logistics hubs, multimodal handling facilities, and export-grade quality testing laboratories—all of which are necessary to meet international standards of food safety, packaging, traceability, and delivery timelines.

Limited awareness and technical capacity among local farmers, rice millers, FPOs, and SHGs further challenge Kanker's transition into an export-ready district. Traditional milling practices, conventional packaging methods, and limited exposure to certifications such as HACCP, ISO 22000, GlobalG.A.P., and organic standards restrict the district's ability to penetrate premium global markets. The absence of training in branding, international packaging norms, value-added processing techniques, and

digital market access tools has prevented local producers from leveraging the rising global demand for clean-label, nutrition-focused foods and sustainable forest products.

Marketing challenges also persist. Unlike other emerging export districts, Kanker's products are largely absent from national and international trade fairs, digital marketplaces, and branding initiatives. The lack of a distinctive district-level brand—for example, for low-GI rice, health-focused rice blends, or natural MFP-based products—limits visibility and value realisation. At the same time, access to affordable finance for technology upgrades, compliance audits, and processing equipment remains limited, particularly for micro and small enterprises.

However, these challenges create a compelling opportunity for structured and transformative development. The district's strong agricultural base, coupled with its access to high-quality MFP, positions Kanker to evolve into a hub for value-added rice products, nutraceutical ingredients, and sustainable forest-based foods. With targeted investments in modern milling, integrated pack houses, cold storage, scientific warehousing, and nutraceutical-grade processing units, the district can build an export ecosystem that aligns with global trends in health, convenience, and sustainability. Capacity-building efforts, supported by APEDA, Spices Board, NABARD, and PMFME, can equip local producers with the skills needed for compliance, branding, and market entry. By strengthening infrastructure, enhancing skills, and promoting value addition, Kanker can transition from a single-commodity exporter to a diversified, high-value participant in India's export landscape—demonstrating how an early-stage district can be strategically guided toward sustainable and inclusive growth.

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