

Goyal Calls on Indian Diplomats to Drive Trade Growth Globally



In a move aimed at expanding India's export footprint, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal held a high-level virtual meeting this week with Indian missions across more than 100 countries. The goal: to strengthen trade relationships, open new markets, and support domestic exporters in navigating global challenges.

The engagement marks a significant step in aligning India's diplomatic presence with its commercial objectives. Goyal urged ambassadors and trade officials stationed abroad to act as "economic frontliners," helping Indian businesses access key markets and promote investment in strategic sectors.

"We must shift from passive diplomacy to proactive economic engagement," Goyal said during the session. "Indian missions should identify untapped trade opportunities, facilitate exporters, and promote India's strengths in technology, innovation, and manufacturing."

The meeting highlighted government plans to push exports beyond \$500 billion in merchandise for the fiscal year 2024–25. Priority sectors include electronics, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy, and textiles, industries that are expected to play a central role in India's future export growth.

Goyal stressed the need for real-time market intelligence and called for greater coordination between the Ministry of External Affairs and the Department of Commerce. He also encouraged missions to support Indian businesses in dealing with non-tariff barriers, certification issues, and regulatory challenges in overseas markets.

The initiative is part of a broader strategy to position India as a key player in the global supply chain realignment. With companies worldwide reassessing sourcing strategies amid geopolitical shifts, India is seen as a stable and cost-competitive alternative for manufacturing and services.

Ashwani Kumar, President of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), praised the effort. "This outreach bridges the gap between diplomacy and commerce. Active involvement of embassies will help exporters respond more effectively to global demand," Kumar said.

India has already signed several free trade agreements (FTAs) in recent years and is currently negotiating new ones with major economies. Trade experts believe this diplomatic-commercial coordination can boost outcomes from such deals.

As India eyes higher global rankings in trade, Goyal's call to action underscores the importance of unified efforts across government and industry. The Commerce Ministry plans to hold quarterly reviews with missions to track progress, address bottlenecks, and refine strategies.

With global trade facing both risks and opportunities, India's emphasis on economic diplomacy is expected to play a crucial role in shaping its long-term growth and resilience.