

Goyal Urges Exporters to Maximise Trade Deals as US Tariff Relief Arrives

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Union Commerce and Industry Minister **Piyush Goyal** has urged Indian exporters and industry associations to fully leverage the country's expanding network of **free trade agreements (FTAs)** and recent tariff relief measures to boost global market access and grow export volumes. The call came during a high-level meeting with representatives from 35 Export Promotion Councils and key industry bodies.

Addressing the gathering, Goyal highlighted that India has recently concluded several trade agreements with developed markets, including the United States and European partners, designed to open preferential pathways for Indian goods and services. He emphasised that these pacts—when fully utilised—could drive job creation, strengthen competitiveness and help micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) reach wider global audiences.

One of the biggest developments in recent weeks has been the **reduction of US tariffs on Indian exports**, part of an interim trade framework agreed with Washington. After years of punitive tariff spikes that constrained Indian exports, the US has scaled back reciprocal duties on several categories of Indian products, prompting industry leaders to welcome the relief as a major boost to competitiveness.

Industry groups also expressed appreciation for assurances that India would seek benefits similar to those negotiated by Bangladesh, where **garments made with US-sourced cotton and yarn enjoy zero-tariff access** under certain conditions. Goyal clarified that Indian exporters are expected to receive comparable provisions within the framework of the interim trade deal, helping textiles and apparel producers retain and grow market share in the US — one of India's largest export destinations.

Government officials portrayed the current trade policy era as a pivotal moment for exporters. With FTAs in place or under negotiation with major economies — including the European Union, the United Kingdom and other strategic partners — Indian businesses are being encouraged to look beyond domestic demand and aggressively pursue overseas opportunities.

“Look beyond domestic markets; these trade engagements put the world stage at your feet,” Goyal told the assembled exporters, underscoring that enhanced market access — paired with strengthened quality standards and competitiveness — could unlock untapped export potential across sectors.

Representatives from labour-intensive industries such as textiles, gems and jewellery, leather goods, engineering products and handicrafts welcomed the tariff relief and trade outreach strategy, saying it provides stability and renewed confidence after a period of disrupted export growth.

The government's strong push to integrate Indian exporters with global value chains reflects broader policy goals, such as job creation and boosting India's share of world trade — aligning with national visions like *Viksit Bharat* (Developed India) and the *Make in India* initiative.

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