

## **India holds talks to deepen trade ties with the UK and European Union**

On February 6, 2021, India's Hon'ble Minister for Commerce and Industry Mr. Piyush Goyal and the UK Secretary of State for International Trade Ms. Elizabeth Truss agreed to deepen bilateral trade cooperation through an Enhanced Trade Partnership (ETP). Ms. Truss met her Indian counterpart during her four-day tour to India along with a business delegation to explore trade and investment ties with the world's fifth largest economy.

During the meeting, both the sides reviewed progress in negotiations after the 14th Joint Economic and Trade Committee meeting, which was held on July 24, 2020 virtually. The joint co food and drink, information communications technology (ICT), life sciences, chemicals, and services – we made progress on understanding, and taking steps to remove, non-tariff barriers.

UK is a major trade partner of India as 16% of India's exports to the European Union is bound for this country. More significantly, UK accounts for 26% of India's apparel exports to the European Union. Hence, trade deals with both the EU and the UK are crucial. Besides apparel, India also exports labour intensive goods such as gem and jewellery, footwear and pharmaceutical products to the UK.

At the same time, India aims to bolster its relations with the European Union to secure its 500 million large consumer market. On February 5, 2021, Hon'ble Minister Piyush Goyal co-chaired the 1st High Level Dialogue (HLD) with the European Union Executive Vice-President & Trade Commissioner Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis. During the meeting, both the sides agreed to regular interactions for re-initiation of bilateral trade and investment agreements, with an interim agreement.

Negotiation on free trade agreement with the EU failed to make progress after 16 rounds of talks between both the sides during 2007-2013. It is hoped that Indian and European Union trade representatives will renew their efforts to clinch a trade deal that is mutually beneficial for the business communities of both the sides.

### **Notifications**

#### **PIB**

Central Sector Scheme on farm mechanization

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1696263>

Initiatives of Government of India to Promote Farm Mechanization

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1696224>

India's Commerce Minister meets the Secretary of State for International Trade of the U.K

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1696154>

Demand and Production of Steel

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1696202>

Skill Development Centres opened in the country

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