

Not just China, all PLI-led visas being fast-tracked: Goyal

100-day agenda a work in progress, says minister

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The government is expediting visa-related issues to bring technicians to India from any country, not just China, as and when required, to ensure the smooth implementation of the flagship production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme aimed at boosting domestic manufacturing.

“If those under the PLI scheme need to get their equipment installed, we try to expedite the ability to get technicians into India from any country, whichever it may be,” Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal told *Business Standard* in an interview.

Goyal’s response comes against the backdrop of the industry seeking government intervention in resolving visa-processing delays related to Chinese vendors involved in manufacturing projects.

Companies have been facing productivity issues due to visa hurdles in areas ranging from component manufacturing to installation or repair of machinery, especially under the PLI scheme.

Several ministries and government departments have been addressing the outstanding visa-related issues pertaining to experts and technicians from China with the Ministry of External Affairs. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has also been coordinating matters with the

external affairs ministry.

Additionally, the Ministry of Home Affairs has been working towards finalising a standard operating procedure to streamline the process to apply for Indian business visas under PLI schemes.

The scheme covers 14 sectors, including mobile phones, drones, white goods, telecommunications, textiles, automotive, pharmaceutical drugs, among others.

Delays in visa-related issues have affected the PLI scheme in sectors such as solar PV modules, speciality steel, and white goods.

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Piyush Goyal, commerce and industry minister



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FTAs not part of 100-day agenda: Goyal

With the ₹1.97 trillion PLI scheme, the Centre aims to make India a manufacturing powerhouse, improve the cost competitiveness of locally produced goods, create employment opportunities, and curb cheap imports.

As far as the 100-day agenda of the National Democratic Alliance-led government's third term is concerned, Goyal said the commerce department and DPIIT were still working on it and it was a "work in progress". "As it gets finalised, we will be sharing it with you," he said, adding that the signing of free trade agreements (FTAs) was not a part of any 100-day agenda since it was an ongoing process. India is currently negotiating an FTA with a bunch of nations, including Oman, Peru, the EU, and the UK. "As I said earlier, we never put in those bracketed timelines. They allow it to be discussed, negotiated properly at length, and we never input any timeline to talks," Goyal said. On the e-commerce policy, the minister said the government had not yet got down to looking at this issue specifically.

