

# Goyal to steer fresh trade talks in US

Four-day talks on proposed bilateral trade agreement scheduled to begin from May 17



**Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will hold meetings with USTR Jamieson Greer and US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick**

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Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will lead a team of senior Indian officials to Washington starting May 17 for discussions with their US counterparts on the proposed bilateral trade agreement (BTA), an official said on Tuesday.

During the visit, Goyal will hold meetings with US Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer and US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick on the agreement.

The four-day talks (May 17-20) come against the backdrop of both countries exploring the possibility of an interim trade arrangement in goods to secure

“early mutual wins” ahead of finalising the first phase of the trade agreement by fall (September-October) this year.

The official said the chief negotiators of both countries will hold meetings from May 19-22. Goyal will reach Washington on May 16.

The main issues that will figure in the negotiations include market access, rules of origin, and non-tariff barriers.

India’s proposal to impose retaliatory duty on certain American products over American tariffs on steel and aluminium would also figure in the BTA deliberations.

Through these discussions, officials from New Delhi and Washington aim to take advantage of the 90-day tariff

pause window to advance the talks.

The US has suspended the additional 26 per cent tariffs on India till July 9. It was announced on April 2 to bridge the widening trade deficit.

However, the 10 per cent baseline tariff imposed on the countries will continue to remain in place.

To give impetus to the talks, India’s Chief Negotiator for BTA Rajesh Agrawal, special secretary in the Department of Commerce, and Assistant US Trade Representative for South and Central Asia Brendan Lynch had last month held three-day talks in Washington.

Before that in March, Goyal held bilateral meetings with Greer and Lutnick.