

India-UK FTA: Goyal, Badenoch ask teams to iron out differences

Our Bureau

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Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and UK Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch have asked their negotiating teams to iron out differences in the on-going talks for an India-UK Free Trade Agreement so that the pact is concluded at the earliest, per an official statement from the Commerce Department.

"The Ministers urged the negotiating team to work together with an aim to iron out the differences in the spirit of mutual accommodation based on the principle of reciprocity and respect for each other's sensitivities, for a balanced, mutually beneficial, fair and equitable outcome," the statement said.

Badenoch and Goyal met in New Delhi on Tuesday to discuss the India-UK FTA negotiations and also met businesses from both sides.

The sixth round of negotiations for the India-UK FTA, the first after Rishi Sunak



IN TRADE TALKS. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal with UK Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch, in New Delhi. PTI

was sworn in as the Prime Minister of UK, began in New Delhi on Monday. The two governments launched the FTA negotiations in January 2022 and set a target of doubling bilateral trade to \$100 billion by 2030.

While about 19 of the 26 chapters to be covered in the India-UK FTA have been settled, major areas that still need to be sorted out include market access for automobiles, whisky and processed food, visa rules for workers and students, IPRs, government procure-

ment and financial and legal services.

"Both nations have come to the table with the very highest of ambitions and a willingness to work together towards a mutually beneficial deal. I'm excited about the opportunities we can create for British business," Badenoch stated in an official release circulated by the British High Commission in New Delhi on Monday.

Goyal said that investment and economic relations between India and the UK were already strong and had grown over the years.