

# FTA with India: UK Trade Secretary to work out a 'mutually beneficial' deal

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UK Secretary of State for International Trade Kemi Badenoch is in New Delhi to participate in the sixth round of the India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA) talks, which began on Monday, with her Indian counterpart Piyush Goyal.

After missing the Diwali deadline set by then British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Prime Minister Narendra Modi early this year, the two negotiating teams, meeting face-to-face the first time after Britain's new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak took charge in October 2022, will seek to iron out thorny issues.

"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 re-

lease circulated by the British High Commission in New Delhi.

## **DOUBLING TRADE**

India and the UK launched the FTA negotiations in January 2022 and set a target of doubling bilateral trade to \$100 billion by 2030.

Although 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 procurement and financial and legal services.

"The UK-India FTA remains a top priority for industry. Trade is a fundamental driver of growth and India will be an important partner and market as the UK looks to escape stagflation, attract skilled labour and deliver on the green transition," said Andy Burwell, International Director at the Confederation of British Industry.