

## India, UK to hold next round of FTA talks in Jan

MUKESH JAGOTA  
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INDIA AND THE UK have wrapped up the 13th round of negotiations on a free trade agreement (FTA) after four months. The next round will be held in January.

"These negotiations (in 13th round) focussed on complex issues, including goods, services and investment," a joint outcome statement issued after the conclusion of the round said.

The 13th round began from September 18 and continued till December 15 and included both in-person sessions in Delhi and London and virtual talks.

"India and the UK will continue to negotiate towards a comprehensive and ambitious free trade agreement," the joint statement said.

India and the UK launched the talks for an FTA in January 2022, with an aim to conclude talks by Diwali (October 24, 2022), but the deadline was missed due to political developments in the UK. Since then, negotiators of both sides met every month to wrap up the deal.

A bilateral investment treaty (BIT) is being negotiated along with the FTA and both the agreements are expected to be signed jointly.