

Accessible, fair logistics set to be discussed at G20 trade track

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At the upcoming meeting of the trade and investment working group under its G20 presidency, India will push the agenda of how logistics can be made 'fair and accessible' for developing nations, people aware of the matter said.

The focus will also be on how logistics costs can be reduced, as far as international trade is concerned.

"Shipping costs have fallen as the pandemic-related supply chain disruption has eased. A large portion of its containers come from China. To increase container production, we also plan to launch a PLI (production-linked incentive scheme) on this," one of the people cited above told *Business Standard*.

Domestic manufacturing of containers will not only cut logistics costs but is also expected to reduce its dependence on China as far as shipping containers are concerned.

The commerce department is now gearing up for the trade and investment working group, where five priority areas, such as logistics, growth, World Trade Organization (WTO) reforms, MSMEs, and resilient global value chains have been identified.

The department is the nodal department for trade and investment working groups under the G20 sherpa track. Government officials said four working group meetings would be organised, the first one being in Mumbai in March-end, followed by meetings in Bengaluru, Kevadia, and Jaipur.

The discussion assumes significance since India took over G20 Presidency from December 1. The summit will take place in September.

Under the topic of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), India will focus on initiatives such as govern-



TRADE TALKS

- Reducing the cost of logistics for international trade
- Domestic manufacturing of containers to lower shipping container dependency on China
- Five priority areas for commerce department: logistics, growth, WTO reforms, MSMEs, and resilient global value chains
- For MSMEs, focus is on initiatives such as govt e-marketplace, ONDC

ment e-marketplace (GeM), Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) and how these platforms can help small businesses.

"We want to focus on how small businesses can play a larger role in trade, and how they can adopt technology. With initiatives (in India) such as ONDC, we will try to bring focus on how these tools can be used, with specific focus on MSMEs," another official said.

Similarly, India will leverage G20 to initiate talks on WTO reforms since the member-nations are also gearing up towards the WTO's 13th ministerial conference in the United Arab Emirates in February next year.

For instance, India will push for developing a framework to address crucial issues at the WTO in circumstances such as Covid-19 pandemic.

