

‘India-UK FTA talks to conclude by Aug 31’

Countries sign MoU on education, framework pact on healthcare workers

OUR BUREAU

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The India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations will be concluded by August 31 this year and after internal approvals on both sides the agreement would be ready to be signed as per convenience of both leaders, Commerce Secretary BVR Subrahmanyam has said.

Alluding to the on-going political situation in the UK, the Commerce Secretary, while interaction with the media at an event, pointed out that irrespective of the party in power in the UK, the logic of FTA with India was irreversible.

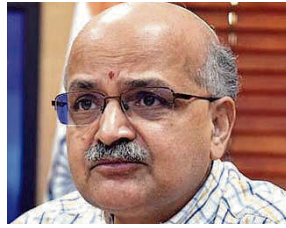
There have been concerns that Boris Johnson's resignation as the UK Prime Minister and the on-going internal party polls in the country to appoint the new PM could delay the proposed FTA between the two countries.

India and the UK signed two MoUs on mutual recognition of educational qualifications including maritime education and a framework agreement on healthcare work force, according to a press statement issued by the Commerce & Industry Ministry on Thursday.

Enhanced trade partnership

The MoUs and a framework agreement signed with UK are part of the commitments made by both parties under the 'Enhanced Trade Partnership' (ETP) launched by the Prime Ministers of both countries on 4th May 2021, the statement pointed out.

Following the launch of ETP,



Commerce Secretary
BVR Subrahmanyam

both sides had also started negotiations for an FTA on January 13, 2022. The fifth round of negotiations, hosted by India, is currently on in Delhi.

An MoU on education was signed by K Sanjay Murthy, Secretary, Department of Higher Education on behalf of India. "This MoU provides for mutual recognition of educational qualifications and duration of study undertaken by students within duly approved and recognised higher education institutions in the two countries. On a reciprocal basis, Indian Senior Secondary School/Pre-University Certificates will be considered suitable for entry into UK higher education institutions," the statement said.

Similarly, the Bachelor degree, Master's degree and Doctoral degree of India and the UK will also be considered equivalent to each other. "Apart from encouraging student mobility, the mutual recognition of qualifications would also promote excellence in higher education through cooperation, academic and research exchanges," the release stated.

Another MoU, on maritime education qualification, was also signed by the two countries. The two countries will mutually recognise the certificates of maritime education and training, competency and endorsements of seafarers issued by each other.