

India-Afghanistan to set up joint chamber of commerce, industry

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India and Afghanistan have decided to depute commercial representatives at their respective embassies and institutionalise a “joint chamber of commerce and industry,” the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Tuesday.

The decision to set up a joint Afghanistan-India chamber of commerce and industry was one of the several taken during the November 19-25 visit of Afghan Minister of Industry and Commerce Alhaj Nooruddin Azizi to India.

During his visit, Azizi met External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and his

deputy Jitin Prasada.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, the MEA said the visit reflected the strong commitment of both sides for deepening bilateral engagement and cooperation in trade, economy and investments.

“India remains committed to working closely with Afghanistan to advance this economic partnership in a manner that brings sustainable benefits to the people of both countries,” the MEA said.

Azizi’s visit follows the week-long visit to India of Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi in October, and India subsequently upgrading its technical mission in Kabul to that of a full-fledged embassy.

The Taliban government in Afghanistan is keen to increase trade with India and has invited Indian companies to take up mining projects there. It has also proposed a five-year tax holiday to Indian businesses investing in Afghanistan.

Azizi and Goyal discussed issues ranging from trade facilitation, market access, connectivity, and capacity-building. The two announced the initiation of the air freight corridor on the Kabul-Delhi and Kabul-Amritsar sectors. They also welcomed the reactivation of the India-Afghanistan Joint Working Group on Trade, Commerce and Investment and agreed to explore opportunities for collaboration in mining and other high-value sectors.