

Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister chairs 9th Governing Council Meeting of Bureau of Indian Standards

Under mandatory hallmarking, more districts to be added: Shri Pralhad Joshi

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Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and New & Renewable Energy, Shri Pralhad Joshi presided over the 9th meeting of Governing Council of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) in New Delhi. He is *ex-officio* President of the Governing Council of BIS.

During his presidential address, the Union Minister said BIS has brought 371 districts in the country under mandatory hallmarking scheme of jewellery thereby, providing quality assurance to consumers. He directed that more districts be also added in the coming year. He laid special emphasis on making industry and other stakeholders more aware of BIS initiatives.

He also stressed upon the importance of Indian standards for various products and services and appreciated the milestone achievements of BIS with formulation of 23798 Indian standards across sectors.

Shri Joshi mentioned the support provided by BIS to various Ministries/Departments in increasing the number of QCOs from 14 in 2014 to 191 today, covering 774 products along with two horizontal QCOs, which would contribute towards safety of consumers.

He highlighted the contribution of BIS in promoting a quality ecosystem. The Minister said that BIS is more than a regulator and urged the Bureau to act as a facilitator by adopting industry friendly approach and promoting the adoption of BIS mark on voluntary basis. Appreciating that the laboratories processed over 2.5 lakh samples in 2024-25, he also said that BIS should make concerted efforts to enhance transparency in sample testing and issuing certifications.

He placed importance on the need for increased engagement with MSME sector to handhold these small units and ensure their preparedness for compliance with technical regulations. Appreciating initiatives such as Manak Manthan and Manak Samvaad at the level of Branch offices of BIS, he laid emphasis on closer engagement with industry, accessibility and prompt redressal of any problems faced by the small industries. In order to strengthen the regulatory system, he emphasized that BIS should have zero tolerance towards any malpractices.

Approving proposals worth Rs. 78 crore to strengthen testing capacity in areas such as aerospace components, solar PV modules, organic food, and high-voltage equipment, he expressed the need to boost the testing infrastructure in the country to match the demands of an emerging economy. He pointed out that all these holistic efforts will *help in* positioning India as a global leader in standardization.

Ministers from Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Gujarat and Assam, who are members of the Governing Council, were also present during the meeting. Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs, GoI, Smt. Nidhi Khare and senior officers from Department and BIS also attended the meeting. BIS gave a detailed presentation on its key activities of Standardization, Certification and Lab Activities.

BIS presented before the Governing Council, the Annual Programme on Standardization (APS), Laboratory

Activities, and Conformity Assessment for the year 2025-26.

BIS informed that India is hosting the 89th edition of IEC General Meeting from 08 - 19 September 2025 in New Delhi, where more than 1500 participants from over 150 countries are expected to participate and a series of Management meetings, Technical Committee meetings, Workshops, Exhibition and other events will be organized.

The Governing Council reviewed key developments and achievements and endorsed the way forward for BIS's strategic initiatives such as;

- Annual Programme for Standardisation (APS) 2025-26: formulated through enhanced engagement with 40 Central Ministries and 84 industry associations, and focused on filling sectoral gaps and aligning standards with national priorities.
- Laboratory Modernization Plan: Infrastructure upgrades, automation, digitization, and creation of complete test facilities for critical products have been identified as key areas of focus for year 2025-26.

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