



First Round of India–Maldives Free Trade Agreement Negotiations Concludes Successfully

India–Maldives FTA Negotiations Register Significant Progress Across Eight Technical Sessions

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In a major step towards expanding bilateral trade and investment engagement, the first round of negotiations for the India–Maldives Free Trade Agreement (FTA) concluded successfully. The negotiations were held in virtual mode from 29 June to 7 July 2026.

India's negotiating team was led by Chief Negotiator Mr. Ujjwal Kumar Ghosh, Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, while the Maldives delegation was led by its Chief Negotiator Mr. Yusuf Riza.

During the first round, negotiating teams from both sides engaged in text-based discussions across eight technical sessions covering eight policy areas. Both sides made substantive progress across the negotiating tracks and reached broad convergence on several issues.

On 8 July 2026, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal met his Maldivian counterpart, Mr. Mohamed Saeed, Minister of Economic Development, Transport and Trade of the Maldives. The Ministers reviewed the progress of ongoing bilateral economic initiatives, including the India–Maldives FTA negotiations. As India and the Maldives commemorate 60 years of diplomatic relations, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to expedite the conclusion of the Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) and the Free Trade Agreement (FTA). They also agreed to further deepen cooperation in tourism, startups, digital payments, MSMEs and trade to unlock new opportunities for both countries.

India is the second-largest trading partner of the Maldives. Bilateral trade between the two countries stood at USD 771.76 million in 2025–26, compared to USD 679.70 million in 2024–25, registering a growth of 13.54 per cent.

The proposed FTA is expected to further strengthen bilateral economic and trade relations by enhancing market access, facilitating investment, promoting greater economic cooperation and contributing to sustainable economic growth in both countries. Both sides are working towards a broad-based, balanced and comprehensive agreement guided by the principles of fairness and reciprocity.



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