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**Commerce and Industry Minister meets the Industry and traders Association; Assures them that the Ministry is working to solve their problems**

Ministry of Commerce and Industry held interaction, through Video conferencing, with various Industry and Trade associations of the country to assess the ground situation and problems being faced by them in the wake of Covid-19 and subsequent lockdown. Union Commerce and Industry & Railways Minister Shri Piyush Goyal, MoS Shri Som Parkash, and officers of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry were present in the meeting.

The industry associations appraised the status and progress made in the last few days, since the announcement of the lockdown and similar meetings held since then. They raised the issues of liquidity crunch, orders cancellation, labour scarcity, different interpretation of the central Government's orders by the state and district authorities, Trucks being stranded, difficulty in getting the spare parts, etc. At the same time, they informed that the situation has improved considerably in last fortnight, so much so that IT industry has been able to cover upto 95% of the ground. They also informed about their CSR activities, best practices and Community kitchens, being undertaken by the industries and traders.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Piyush Goyal said that stress on economy and livelihood has to be protected but saving the lives of the people of the country is of prime importance. The decision on lockdown will be taken at appropriate time, after making due assessment, but gains made during the period can't be lost, through a hurried approach. He drew their attention to certain states planning extension of the lockdown. Shri Goyal called upon the industry to have a calibrated and rational approach to the problem, by evolving protocols and procedures, which will help them in improving their productivity and efficiency, without compromising on the health security of their employees and other stakeholders. "I think we should start talking more practical instead of making wish lists.", he said.

Shri Goyal said that the Ministry is already working to solve the logistics and export-import related problems, and is also taking up other concerns of the industry and traders with various ministries. The Minister said that the labour, which had migrated recently, will return after the COVID cases start declining. On the demand of certain participants for early announcement of the relief package for the industry, the Minister said that the feedback received is being forwarded to the Finance Ministry for consideration, which is likely to take a balanced, nuanced approach. Shri Goyal appreciated the humanitarian activities undertaken by the Associations' members. He called upon the associations to motivate their members and others to download the Aarogya Setu App, which he described as an effective technological tool to fight Covid-19.

The meeting was attended by Office bearers of ASSOCHAM, CII, FICCI and other Industry & traders Association.