

Cooperation, Collaboration and Commitment will guide the strategic partnership between India and ASEAN countries, says Shri Piyush Goyal

India demonstrated itself as the trusted partner to the world, particularly in times of stress: Shri Goyal

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Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal today said that 3Cs- Cooperation, Collaboration and Commitment, will guide the strategic partnership between India and ASEAN countries. Addressing the ASEAN-India Business Council virtual meet, Shri Goyal said the Covid-19 pandemic period provided a unique opportunity to India to demonstrate itself as the trusted partner to the world, particularly in times of stress. Shri Goyal extended a hand of friendship to the ASEAN region, which he described as deep and valuable partners, and partners in the progress.

The Minister said that Aatamnirbhar Bharat connotes a self-reliant country which is ready to engage with the world from the position of strength and confidence, and on equal and fair terms. He said that India and ASEAN have not been able to harness the full trade potential, for various reasons, but now is the time to open matrix to expand trade, address concerns of all nations and businesses, and resolve the differences. He extended India's friendship and partnership to ASEAN through businesses, so that together both the partners are able to succeed, secure future, work together, attain prosperity, and achieve a target of \$300 billion trade. Shri Goyal said that the business council meeting is a good forum to discuss concerns and best practices, share ideas, and flag the problems.

Shri Goyal said that during the early days of pandemic, India went out to the world for its requirements to fight Covid-19, but didn't get much traction, as everyone was holding on for their own requirements. But, India, on the other hand, with the ability to provide medicines, acted as the Pharmacy for the world. We supplied medicines to over 150 countries of the world, to every part of the world, particularly to the less developed nations. Restrictions were imposed initially but that was with the noble intent of ensuring that the poor nations are not deprived of the medicines. All this showed that India is a resilient country, a trusted partner and a friend indeed.

Shri Goyal said that the country developed adequate capacity to manufacture PPE, masks, and ramped up our testing capabilities from under 1000 per day to about a million a day. "We have been self-sufficient under the leadership of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. During the period, Indians developed commitment and consciousness to maintain social distancing, to adequately take care of personal hygiene, wear a mask at all times and care for near ones.", the Minister said. He said that India demonstrated its resilience, ability to overcome problems and our collective efforts ensured that we can protect lives and livelihoods. We enforced strictest lockdown to save lives, and then ensured quick unlockdown to bring take care of the livelihood issues, he added.

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