

FTA with New Zealand will boost leather, other industries: Goyal

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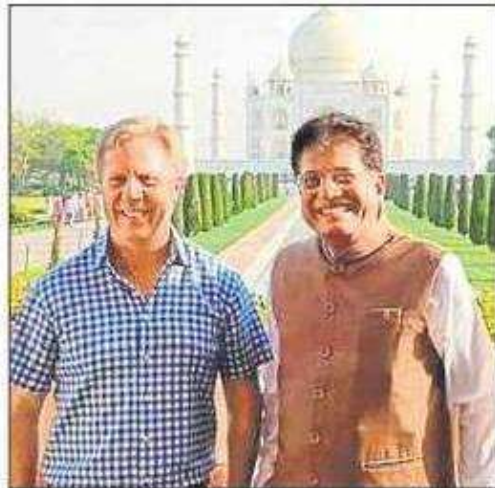
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AGRA: Union commerce minister Piyush Goyal on Sunday said the long-pending Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to be signed in Delhi on Monday between India and New Zealand will open opportunities for leather business, handicraft, handloom and those engaged in ODOP business in Agra.

"This is the outcome of the ongoing talks between PM Narendra Modi and his New Zealand counterpart Christopher Luxon for years," said Goyal while talking to media outside the Taj Mahal here.

Goyal, who arrived in Agra on Saturday night, was at the Taj Mahal in early hours of Sunday along with New Zealand's minister for trade and investment Todd McClay and his wife.

"This FTA will pave the way for enhancement of business and trade between New Zealand and India within a few months. The Indian goods will reach New Zealand markets without any tax or import duty and besides other Indian cities, Agra too will bene-



Piyush Goyal with New Zealand minister Todd McClay at the Taj Mahal in Agra on Sunday.

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fit with its leather industry, handloom, handicraft and ODOP items finding new market," the Union minister said. In reply to a question, Goyal said under PM Narendra Modi's leadership, the National Democratic Alliance will form governments in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. "People of West Bengal are fed up with years of harassment, lawlessness and bad administration. As such, change in West Bengal is imminent," he added.

On several AAP leaders joining the BJP, Goyal said the way the AAP had cheated the masses

in Punjab and Delhi and the way corruption touched heights during its regime, it was tough for anyone to bear all this and so they decided to join the BJP.

Later in the day, ministers from India and New Zealand attended India-New Zealand Business Meet at a hotel here. They were informed that Agra has 75% share in leather exports of nation and was having about 5000 MSME units engaged in providing jobs to 4 to 5 lakh individuals directly and indirectly with exports to Europe, America, and other parts of the globe.

New Zealand's minister for trade and investment Todd McClay said strengthening of business ties with India will open doors for trade of raw material besides boosting design and manufacturing sector.

Later, Goyal posted on X "Had an enriching industry engagement in Agra with leaders from the leather & footwear, light engineering, AYUSH, pharma, medical devices and sports goods sector, joined by my friend Mr Todd McClay, Minister for Trade and Investment, New Zealand."