

# Food Processing ministry forms Task Force in the wake of Covid-19 to resolve problems of industry: Harsimrat Kaur Badal

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Union Food Processing Industries Minister Smt. Harsimrat Kaur Badal assured industry representatives that a dedicated Task Force had been established to resolve all problems being faced by the food processing and ancillary industries during the current Covid-19 lockdown.

In a video conference with major industry associations such as CII, FICCI, ASSOCHAM, PHDCCI, AIFPA, ICC, FINER and DICCI today, the Union minister said the Task Force included all senior officials of the food processing ministry and members of Invest India. She said the team had already received 222 issues out of which 98 had been resolved and the rest were under process of resolution.

During the video conference, industry representatives told Smt. Harsimrat Badal that though directions had been sent to all State governments about the need for allowing the manufacturing and movement of essential items, they were being interpreted in different ways by the State governments. They stressed the need for uniform format for all States regarding manufacture and movement of food products. The representatives shared the problems related to factory shutdown, permission to operate warehouses, personnel movement and logistic disruption. The industry representatives said that required labour was not available for smooth manufacturing and that there was a shortage of transport also. They further urged that 'kirana stores' be allowed to open across the country to ensure the forward linkage was established.

FPI Minister said talks would be initiated with the transport unions to ensure smooth supply of food material and access to raw materials by the food processing industry.

She assured industry representatives that she would review all suggestions and grievances submitted by them to the task force.

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