

Visa curbs to hit US companies in India, cautions Sitharaman

FC BUREAU

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IN a strong message to the US and other developing countries, which have tightened visa norms for skilled professionals, commerce minister Nirmala Sitharaman said India wanted the US to honour its commitment. In a veiled threat to America, the minister said the restrictive regime would also impact the US companies operating in India.

She was, however, non-committal on dragging these countries to the World Trade Organization (WTO). "At this stage, we

will engage constructively. At the same time, India will ensure that it will not accept unfair treatment," she told reporters when asked whether India would

Tough talk

■ Minister said the US has committed a certain number of H1B visas to India and "we would definitely want the US to honour that commitment"

■ India would actively pursue the proposal in WTO, seeking an agreement on trade facilitation in services



move the multilateral trade body against the US and Australia. "So it is not an unilateral (issue), where Indian companies would have to face this,

there are several US companies in India which are doing business for years here," she said. The restrictive visa regime would also impact the US companies that are operating in India, she added.

On the new executive order signed by US president Donald Trump, which seeks to prioritise H1B visa for the most skilled and the highest paid, Sitharaman said America has committed a certain number of these visas to India and "we would definitely want the US to honour that commitment."