

Why Did My Indian Supplier Raise the Price After I Paid?



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A price rise after you have paid is usually one of three things. A genuine cost letter (freight shocks, bulk fabric that costs more than the sample lot) is negotiable and should come with evidence. A re-price once the supplier holds your deposit is a contract problem you fix in writing. A run of new fees after payment, such as a minimum-order top-up and then a customs or exportation fee, is a known scam, so stop at the first unplanned fee.

The Short Version

- Ask every price letter for its reason, its evidence and whether it touches goods already paid for.
- Freight shocks are real. In March 2026 a buyer reported Indian suppliers sending price-increase letters after the Gulf war hit shipping.
- The scam script is a minimum-order top-up, then a customs or exportation fee. Stop at the first one.
- Fix the shipping mode and cost in the PO, or it can change after dispatch.
- Lock an all-in price to a named place, including export packing, before any deposit.

When an Indian supplier raises the price after your deposit, it's usually one of three things: a genuine cost increase it wants to share, a re-price because it now holds your money, or the fee-escalation scam. The first is negotiable and should come with evidence. The second is fixed with contract wording, and the third ends the conversation, so stop paying at the first unplanned fee.

In September 2024 a US e-commerce seller paid half up front for an order from India. When the invoice for the second half arrived, the supplier had

added a charge, and when asked, "he said that it was for express shipping" ([r/ecommerce, 2024](#)). The amount was small. The first reply was "Just eat it. Not a big deal." Maybe. But that one invoice holds all three questions this post answers - was the cost real, did anyone agree to it, and what stops it happening again. The caveat - nobody publishes how often prices move after an order is placed, so what follows is patterns from our review of importer forum threads, 2019 to 2026, not a rate.

SourcingFrom Intelligence

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- 01 **Price rises after commitment come at three points** - after award, after the deposit, or at the last stage as a separately quoted charge such as export packaging. (*Our forum signal FS-SUP-040, buyers in Australia and the US, 2019 to 2026*)
- 02 **The fee-escalation scam follows a script.** After the first payment comes a "minimum order" top-up, then a "customs" or "exportation" fee. (*FS-SUP-036, four independent accounts, 2021 to 2026*)
- 03 **Freight shocks produce real price letters.** When the 2026 Gulf war hit shipping, a buyer reported Indian suppliers sending mid-contract price-increase letters, and a textile commentator noted that exporters on fixed-price contracts absorbed the rest. (*FS-SHP-062, March and August 2026*)

What we don't know yet

- ☐ How often Indian prices are revised after a PO, and for which stated reasons. We plan to count it from real order change logs.

1. Is a Price Rise After Payment Ever Legitimate?

Yes, and it's worth hearing a supplier out before assuming the worst. A clothing-production voice set out the honest reasons in 2025. The fabric lot used for sampling isn't the bulk lot, trims weren't booked when you

approved, and capacity wasn't held while you decided ([r/ClothingStartups, 2025](#)). Each of those is a real cost that can move between your sample and your order. The fix for that kind is upstream, in how you approve samples, and it's covered on [the sample was perfect, why wasn't the bulk](#).

Freight is the other honest driver. In March 2026 a buyer on a logistics forum reported that suppliers had started sending price-increase letters because of the war affecting Gulf shipping routes ([r/logistics, 2026](#)). In August a textile commentator pointed out who was really carrying it. Exporters who'd signed fixed-price contracts with US or EU buyers back in June were the ones paying - "The exporter eats the difference" ([LinkedIn, 2026](#)). So a supplier asking you to share a freight shock isn't being greedy. It's asking you to renegotiate something it signed, and you're entitled to say no or to meet it partway.

2. How Do I Tell a Cost Letter From a Squeeze?

Look at timing, evidence and scope. Our reading of the forum accounts sorts most cases like this.

	Genuine cost letter	Re-price once paid	Fee-escalation scam
When it arrives	When the cost moves, often mid-contract	Just after award or the deposit, or at the "last hurdle"	Straight after the first payment, then again
What it cites	Freight, material lot, an event you can check	Something vague, or a charge left off the quote	"Minimum order", then "customs" or "exportation"
Evidence offered	Usually, if you ask	Rarely	Never, only urgency
Goods already paid for	Often left alone if you push	Included	There may be no goods
Your move	Negotiate, split or decline	Hold to the written price	Stop paying

The middle column is the one that hurts honest buyers most, because it isn't fraud. It's a supplier using the moment it holds your money. A US buyer who had an injection mould made through an Indian B2B listing platform in 2019 put it sharply - "They usually say whatever they can to get you to use them then jack up the price once they have any leverage" ([r/Entrepreneur, 2019](#)). An Australian furniture importer met it in 2020 at the last stage, when the supplier quoted packaging separately for each chest ([r/Entrepreneur, 2020](#)). Both accounts are old, and an automotive buyer still reported price increases "after award" in April 2026 ([r/procurement, 2026](#)). The fix for all three is the same, and it's at the end of this post.

3. What Does the Fee-Escalation Scam Look Like?

It looks like a sequence, and once you've seen it, you'll spot it on the second message. A buyer pays. Then a "minimum order" top-up appears. Then a fee to release the goods, called "customs" or "exportation". One buyer in 2025

was told a product was "held up in Mexico" and needed "exportation fees that is apparently refundable" ([r/IndiaBusiness, 2025](#)). Another in 2026 paid, received a token fraction of the goods, and was then asked "for large sums of money" ([r/IndiaBusiness, 2026](#)). In one of the accounts in our logs the buyer was ordering a controlled medicine, which tells you something about the kind of seller this script comes from.

The rule is simple. Stop at the first unplanned fee. A real exporter quoted the price before you paid, and under FOB or CIF, export clearance is the seller's job inside that price. Don't send more money to recover money already sent. That's the scam's second act. If you've already paid, the steps to try are on [settling a payment dispute with a supplier](#).

Be fair to the platform and the country, too. These accounts describe a scam that runs through online B2B directory listings, not how Indian exporters trade. The checks that keep you away from it, starting with a registered business and a bank account in its legal name, are on [how to verify Indian suppliers](#).

4. What If the Terms Changed After Dispatch?

Then you've met the quietest version of this problem. In the 2024 case at the top, the supplier switched to express shipping and put the cost on the balance invoice. Our logs flag the same pattern more widely (FS-SHP-064). A buyer who has paid part up front has little to push back with once the goods have left, because the supplier holds the documents and you hold a balance you need to pay to get them.

So fix the shipping in the PO, not after it. Name the mode (sea, air or courier), who books it, the Incoterm with its named place, and say that any change needs your written approval first. If freight costs at the port are the issue rather than the supplier's invoice, that's a different gap, explained on [why your FOB India quote and freight bill don't match](#).

5. Should I Pay, Negotiate or Walk Away?

Ask three questions of any price letter before you answer it. What is the reason, and what's the evidence? Does it touch goods already paid for, or only future orders? And what did we sign?

If the reason is real and documented, negotiate. Splitting a genuine freight shock with a good supplier is often cheaper than finding a new one, and a supplier who absorbed part of it will remember. If the reason is vague and the order is already paid, hold to the written price politely and in writing. If there's no written price, you've learned what to fix next time, and you may have to pay this once. If the letter is a new fee to release goods, walk away.

If you'd rather have someone hold a fixed-price PO with a change log and argue each revision for you, [SourcingSync](#) runs orders that way for buyers in India.

6. How Do I Lock the Price Before the Next Deposit?

Put these in the PO, signed before any money moves.

1. **An all-in price to a named place.** "FOB Nhava Sheva" or "CIF Melbourne", never just "FOB", including export packing and documentation. Packaging quoted separately at the end is the last-stage surprise that appears in our logs.
2. **The price assumptions.** Fabric or material lot, trims, quantity and colours, so a change in any of them is visible as your change or theirs.
3. **The shipping mode and who books it.** Any change needs your written approval.
4. **A freight clause.** Say who carries a freight surcharge that appears after the PO. The 2026 freight letters show why.

5. **"No further charges."** Three words that make every later fee a request, not a bill.
6. **Payments tied to events.** A deposit sized to materials, the balance against a passed inspection and the shipping documents. Why Indian suppliers ask for advance, and what to offer instead, is on [why Indian suppliers ask for full advance](#).
7. **A validity date on the quote.** If the order is placed inside it, the price holds.

How Indian prices build up rung by rung before you reach this point is on [MOQ, pricing and payment terms in India](#).

Questions Buyers Ask

Is it normal for an Indian supplier to raise the price after the deposit? ^

It happens, and it isn't always bad faith. Ask for the reason and evidence, and check whether it touches goods already paid for.

Do I have to pay a customs or export fee my supplier asks for? v

Can I refuse a freight increase? v

How do I stop it next time? v

7. Back to the Express Shipping Charge

"Just eat it" was reasonable advice for one small invoice. It's poor advice as a habit, because the same gap that let a shipping charge slip onto a balance invoice lets a bigger one through next time. One line in the PO, mode and

cost fixed and changes only with written approval, would have closed it before the goods left. Write that line once, and it works on every order after.