

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5828  
ANSWERED ON:02.05.2003  
PROMOTION OF TRADE IN SOUTH ASIA  
ANANTA NAYAK

**Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government have a proposal to promote trade and commerce in South Asia;
- (b) if so, the proposal mooted in that regard for the coming five years; and
- (c) the areas in which trade and commerce proposed to be promoted with South Asian countries?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY)

- (a) It is Government's policy to promote trade and commerce with all countries including those in South Asia.
- (b) Promotion of trade and commerce is a continuous process. India has been exchanging tariff concessions with South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) member countries under SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) to increase trade. India has already entered into a bilateral free trade agreement with Sri Lanka. India has also proposed a free trade agreement to Bangladesh.
- (c) Trade is promoted in all the commodities and services of mutual interest.