

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6869
ANSWERED ON:09.05.2003
PROPOSAL OF EU IN REGARD TO SINGAPORE ISSUES
V. VETRISELVAN

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

- (a) whether European Union (EU) is trying to persuade India to agree to a discussion on the four Singapore issues at the Cancun Ministerial Conference of the WTO;
- (b) whether EU has hinted to lend support to the key Indian demand for liberalization in the services negotiations;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether Trade Commissioner of European Commission has recently visited India and held talks with him; and
- (e) if so, the details and outcome of the issues discussed between two sides?

Answer

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

(a) to (e): Mr. Pascal Lamy, Trade Commissioner of the European Commission has recently been to India and held discussions, among others, with the Minister of Commerce & Industry and Law & Justice on 13 March 2003. It was impressed upon him that the developing countries did not enjoy the full benefits of multilateralism. A number of concerns that India has on various multilateral trade issues were also conveyed to him during the discussions. On Singapore issues, our position that the study process on the four issues, namely, trade and investment; trade and competition policy; transparency in government procurement; and trade facilitation, should continue and that there should be no movement towards rule making was re-iterated. On services, the EC side underlined the sensitivity as regards immigration, especially with workers and trade unions of the European Union. The mandated negotiations on trade in Services under the framework of the General Agreement on Trade in Services are underway, primarily on the basis of the request-offer approach. India and the European Commission have both made requests to each other and are both actively involved in the negotiations. On agriculture, we elaborated on the sensitivity involved domestically especially in view of the fact that a large segment of the Indian population was dependent on agriculture.