

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5924  
ANSWERED ON:04.05.2005  
INDO- AUSTRALIAN TIES  
Saradgi Shri Iqbal Ahmed

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether India and Australia are considering to redouble efforts for stepping up Indo-Australian ties;
- (b) if so, whether Indo-Australian trade is growing and both countries need to step up efforts to fully tap that potential; and
- (c) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by both the Governments in this regard?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) & (c) The bilateral trade between India and Australia during the calendar year 2004 touched a record of Australian Dollar 6.54 billion. The value of total trade saw a steep increase of 52% over the previous year. Government is engaging Australia on a long-term basis to tap the potential for trade between the two countries and has institutionalized regular exchange of visits and dialogue between the two countries in the form of the India-Australia Joint Ministerial Commission. The next meeting of the Joint Ministerial Commission is expected to take place in Australia in May, 2005. Steps are also being taken to introduce India as an investment and trade destination in Australia.