

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2602
ANSWERED ON:04.12.2007
TRADE WITH SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES
Nayak Shri Ananta

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

- (a) whether the Government has any proposal to establish bilateral trade with South West Asian countries;
- (b) if so, whether the Government proposes to sign trade agreement with these countries;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) if not, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) to (d): The West Asian Countries comprise of Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE and Yemen. Our bilateral trade (including oil) with the West Asian Counties amounted to US \$68,986.33 Million in 2006-07 (Exports US \$ 21,165.04 Million and Imports US \$ 47,821.29 Million). In the 4th meeting of the Trade and Economic Relations Committee (TERC), it was decided that the Department of Commerce may move forward negotiating an Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) comprising of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain, Oman and Kuwait. The first round of negotiations was held in Riyadh on 21-22nd March, 2006.