

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3332
ANSWERED ON:15.04.2008
BILATERAL TRADE WITH US AND OTHER COUNTRIES
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

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

- (a) whether India is contemplating a bilateral trade pact with US;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether bilateral trade agreements are currently in the pipeline with atleast 10 potential partners recommended from ASEAN, EU and Canada;
- (d) if so, the number of countries at present with which India has free trade pact; and
- (e) the number of countries with which India is yet to sign FTA during 2008-09 and the likely increase in trade with these countries?

Answer

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

- (a) & (b) No sir.However, India-US Trade Policy Forum has been created in 2005 to promote bilateral trade and investment. Bilateral discussions are also held under the "Commercial Dialogue." A Private Sector Advisory Group has been set up to provide strategic direction, inputs and support to Trade Policy Forum.
- (c) India is currently negotiating Comprehensive trade agreements which include agreement on goods, services, investment and other areas of economic co-operation with its important trading partners including ASEAN and EU.
- (d) India has signed Free Trade Agreements with the following countries :
 - (i) The India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement covering only goods was signed on 28 December 1998.
 - (ii) India and Singapore has signed a Comprehensive Economic Co-operation Agreement (CECA) on 29th June 2005
 - (iii) The Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) covering goods, was signed by the SAARC member countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) during the 12th SAARC Summit in Islamabad on 6 January 2004.
 - (iv) India also has bilateral trade treaties with Nepal and Bhutan, under which duty-free access has been provided to goods from these two countries, on non-reciprocal basis.
- (e) India is negotiating agreements with EU, ASEAN, Thailand, Japan, Korea etc.Signing of FTA or these comprehensive agreements are dependent on conclusion of the negotiations to the satisfaction of all the Parties who are negotiating these agreements.Two way trade & investment flows are likely to rise after the implementation of these agreements.