

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6383

ANSWERED ON:06.05.2013

JOINT MINISTERIAL COMMISSION OF INDIA AND AUSTRALIA

Ajmal Shri Badruddin;Majhi Shri Pradeep Kumar;Patel Shri Kishanbhai Vestabhai;Singh Chaudhary Lal;Yaskhi Shri Madhu Goud

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

- (a) whether a meeting of Joint Ministerial Commission of India and Australia has been held in New Delhi recently and if so, the details thereof along with the issues raised and discussed in the said meeting;
- (b) whether the leaders of both the countries have also reviewed the progress made so far on various economic cooperation agreements between the two countries and if so, the details thereof along with the outcome thereof;
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by both the countries for implementation of the existing economic cooperation agreements and the manner in which both the countries are likely to be benefited as a result thereof;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to enter into a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement with Australia to remove the barriers to trade and investment; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof along with the steps taken/being taken and the time frame fixed/likely to be taken in this regard?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. D. PURANDESWARI)

(a) 14th India-Australia Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) Meeting was held in New Delhi on 29th January, 2013 co-chaired by Shri Anand Sharma, Hon'ble Minister of Commerce, Industry and Textiles, India and the Hon'ble Dr. Craig Emerson MP, Australian Minister for Trade and Competitiveness and Minister assisting the Prime Minister on Asian Century Policy.

The issues discussed during JMC meeting were institutional framework for growth in bilateral trade and investment, initiatives of India Australia CEO forum, Australia and India's mutual interests in the effectiveness of global and regional economic institutions, launch of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership(RCEP) negotiations, strengthening of the East Asia Summit as a forum that incorporated all major economies in the India-Pacific region, G-20, WTO, IOR-ARC, Education and skill development, agriculture cooperation and food security, people-to-people links, etc.

(b) During the JMC, both sides also reviewed bilateral co-operations in sectors like Agriculture, Civil nuclear energy cooperation agreement and Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) etc. These are incorporated in the "Joint Statement". The "Joint Statement" may be accessed from the website of Department of Commerce website at <http://commerce.gov.in> under Head: International Trade, Subhead: Joint Statements and Minutes of Meeting.

(c) In April 2008, a Joint Study Group (JSG) was constituted, inter alia, to examine the feasibility for establishing a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between India and Australia. Based on the recommendations of the JSG, India-Australia are negotiating CECA covering trade in goods, services, investment and IPR related issues. The 1st round of India- Australia CECA negotiations was held during 28th-29th July, 2011. Four rounds of negotiations have been held so far as under: 2nd round 17-18th November, 2011; 3rd Round 24-25th May 2012; 4th round 8-9th November, 2012.

(d)&(e) Yes, Madam both sides are negotiating the CECA as stated above and the fifth round is likely to take place in Mid May, 2013. It is not feasible to indicate the time likely to be taken to complete the negotiations in a balanced manner bringing mutual benefit, and this was recognised by both leaders in JMC.