

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:114
ANSWERED ON:29.11.2006
INDO EU TIES
Hussain Shri Anwar

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Union Government to strengthen its ties with the European Union (EU);
- (b) whether any exchange / training programmes in the field of academics, media and business have taken place during the last one year;
- (c) if so, the details thereof, programme-wise;
- (d) whether EU has any proposals for funding in the North-Eastern Region; and
- (e) if so, the details in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (E) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 114 REGARDING "INDO-EU TIES" TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.11.2006

(a) to (c) : India has always attached importance to its relations with the European Union and GOI has taken several steps to strengthen its ties with the Union. Frequent bilateral interaction takes place at several levels covering the entire gamut of political, economic, S&T, educational, civil society, parliamentary and cultural relations. India-EU relations have grown from what used to be a purely trade and economic driven relationship to a strategic partnership agreed upon at the 5th India-EU Summit at The Hague in 2004. A Joint Action Plan was endorsed at the 6th Summit held in New Delhi in September 2005. It is a comprehensive road map for India-EU interaction in all important sectors. The relationship was further strengthened at the 7th India-EU Summit held in Helsinki on October 13, 2006, when the two sides also agreed to launch negotiations on a broad based Trade and Investment Agreement.

There are various programmes of cooperation relating to academics, media and business.

There is a separate India Window under the Erasmus Mundus programme for Indian students, which is operational since 2005. It provides scholarships for Masters Courses in large number of subjects. There is an EU-India Economic Cross Cultural Programme (ECCP) which promotes and facilitates interactions between civil society organizations in India and EU in the fields of media, enterprise and academic cooperation. Interaction has also begun through the first EU-India Higher Education Fair on 25-28 November 2006.

An India-EU CEO Round Table was launched during the 7th India-EU Summit in October at Helsinki under the lead of the business confederations on both sides. An India-EU Business Summit, which is an annual event, was organized in parallel with the Summit.

The European Commission invites Indian journalists from time to time, inter alia, to acquaint them with the EU and its functioning.

(d) No.

(e) Does not arise.