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India and Indonesia to begin talks on CECA today

Special Correspondent, The Hindu

New Delhi, October 4, 2011: India and Indonesia will begin talks on Tuesday for a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) with an aim to take forward the economic cooperation to a new level by achieving a bilateral trade target of \$25 billion by 2015. Union Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma on Monday reached Jakarta to launch the formal negotiations with Indonesian Trade Minister Mari Elka Pangestu.

Trade and investment between India and Indonesia had seen a massive rise in the last few years with investment by Indian companies having touched \$3.50 billion and another \$25-billion worth of investments in the pipeline.

Although both countries in 2005 had set a target of \$10 billion bilateral trade by 2010 but they surpassed the target by 40 per cent reaching the \$14-billion level. Already during the January-July period this year, trade between the two countries had touched \$13 billion.

The proposed CECA will not only break tariff walls on merchandise trade but also enable professionals from the two countries to take up short-term business assignments in each other's markets. The scope would also cover easing of bilateral investment regime.

Mr. Sharma will also attend the Biennial Trade Ministers Forum during his stay in Jakarta.

Apart from holding talks with his counterpart Ms. Mari Elka Pangestu, he will discuss issues of mutual interest with senior Indonesian ministers. The CECA with Indonesia will be over and above the trade liberalisation already achieved through the India-ASEAN agreement. Indonesia is an important member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations bloc. The country has also implemented a comprehensive pact with other ASEAN members — Malaysia and Singapore.

Bilateral trade between India and Indonesia stood at \$13.2 billion in 2010 but it is highly skewed in favour of the South East Asian country. India's exports to Indonesia were \$3.3 billion against imports of \$10 billion.

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DGAD probes dumping of bonded wood, fibre boards

Press Trust of India

New Delhi, Jan. 9: The Government has initiated a probe into alleged dumping of certain types of organic substances — bonded wood and fibre boards — by China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Sri Lanka with a view to protect domestic players from cheap shipments through the levy of anti-dumping duty. Countries initiate anti-dumping probes to check if the domestic industry has been hurt by a surge in cheap imports.

As a counter-measure, they impose duties as permitted under the multilateral WTO regime. The Directorate-General of Anti-Dumping and Allied Duties (DGAD) has initiated the probe into alleged dumping of “resin or other organic substances — bonded wood or ligneous fibre boards of thickness below 6mm, except insulation boards, laminated fibre boards — originating in or exported from China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Sri Lanka,” a notification by the Commerce Ministry said.

Sufficient evidence

On finding sufficient evidence of dumping of the product by these countries, the DGAD “hereby initiates an investigation into the alleged dumping, and consequent injury to the domestic industry... to determine the existence, degree and effect of alleged dumping and to recommend the amount of anti-dumping measure, which, if levied, would be adequate to remove the injury to the domestic industry,” it said. The investigation is focused on the April 2010-June 2011, period, it added.

Balaji Action Buildwell had filed an application for the probe on behalf of the domestic industry. The applicant accounts for more than 50 per cent of total Indian production of bonded wood and ligneous fibre boards.

India has so far initiated 149 anti-dumping cases against China, which account for over half of such actions taken by the country against foreign nations.

Unlike safeguard duties, which are levied in a uniform way, anti-dumping duties vary from product to product and from country to country.

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India, Indonesia agree to fast track FTA talks

Tripti Aggarwal, PTI

Jakarta, March 5, 2012: India and Indonesia today agreed to fast track the ongoing negotiations for early conclusion of the proposed comprehensive market opening pact, aimed at enhancing bilateral economic engagement between the countries.

Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma, who is here for a three-day visit, met Indonesian Economy Minister Hatta Rajasa and discussed about the progress of the free-trade agreement.

"We have discussed the status of the negotiations on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA). Both sides have agreed to fast-track the negotiations for an early conclusion," Sharma told reporters after his meeting.

In October last year, both the sides started negotiations for CECA, which would cover trade in goods, services and investment.

The bilateral trade stood at over USD 20 billion in 2010-11.

He said that the bilateral trade target of USD 25 billion by 2015 would be achieved well before the time so both sides have felt the need to revise it.

Both the sides also deliberated on the widening the scope of free trade agreement between India-Asean, which would include services and investments. Indonesia is a member of Asean. India and the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean) has already implemented free trade pact in goods and are engaged in intense negotiations to widen the scope of the pact.

Sharma also met his Indonesian commerce counterpart Gita Irawan Wirjawanand and Industry Minister Mohamad S Hidayat.

Both the sides emphasised on increasing economic cooperation in sectors like mining, energy and infrastructure building.

India and Indonesia have identified five areas - manufacturing and skill training; healthcare and pharmaceuticals; mining, agro and food processing; R&D - where joint working groups will be set up. On a tax imposed by Indonesia on coal exports, Sharma said: "These issues have been discussed. There would be a balanced approach, which would be rewarding for both countries".

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