

India, EU should
strive towards
free trade deal,
say experts

NEW DELHI, Jan 3: India and European Union, which recently signed a 'third generation cooperation agreement' should now strive towards free trade agreement for their mutual benefit, experts here say, reports PTI.

Though India and the European Union feel that time was not ripe for a free trade agreement, it was time to think on those lines to ensure that India was not left behind in the globalisation efforts, they say.

The third generation agreement lays the foundation for moving towards free trade with the European Union which had been a major trade partner and India should act now to ensure this became a reality by the turn of the century.

The present agreement gives only most favoured nation treatment to India and as a first step beyond this agreement, the country should strive to get associate member status with the European Union and enter into a trilateral agreement, in which European Community could utilise Indian labour and technocrats for implementation of EU projects in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world, they say.

These suggestions have been mooted by economist Jagdish Bhagwati and G Sundaram, Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat. Sundaram who was earlier Additional Secretary in the Commerce Ministry had initiated the Indo-EU agreement last year and submitted a thesis on commercial policy of the EEC and the association agreement.

His suggestion for moving towards a free trade agreement is contained in his thesis as early as 1977.

Mannan urges member countries Fulfil commitments to ICTVTR

Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday lauded the academic programmes of the Islamic Centre for Technical and Vocational Training and Research (ICTVTR), reports UNB.

"ICTVTR is a glowing symbol of solidarity and cooperation amongst the Islamic countries" contributing in a very meaningful way towards the development of human resources of the member states of the OIC, he said inaugurating the 19th meeting of the ICTVTR Governing Board at a local hotel.

Bhuiyan hoped that the meeting would discuss the financial condition of the centre and make appropriate recommendations. At the same time, he urged all the member countries to fulfil their obligation of mandatory contributions to ICTVTR.

Bangladesh is concerned about the financial position of the centre and always trying to assist it in the realization of

mandatory contributions as per the appeal of last meeting of the Board of Directors, the labour minister said.

He was confident that the bond developed at the centre would go a long way in bringing the Islamic world closer.

"Bangladesh as host country feels very proud and honoured for being deeply involved in rendering service to the Islamic Ummah."

The minister thanked all the member states of the OIC who have contributed to the centre necessary financial resources and rendered all the moral support.

In this regard, he conveyed special thanks to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Islamic Solidarity Fund for their generous donations to the centre.

The inaugural session of the meeting was also addressed by outgoing Chairman of ICTVTR Board of Directors Dr A Al-Dekhyel, Dr Abdul Malik Far-

man on March 27, 1981.

The centre offers academic programmes starting from Trade level to Post Graduate Diploma and Masters Degree in technical education, Bachelor of Science in Engg and higher diploma in Engg.

Students and trainees from various member states of the OIC participated in various long and short training programmes, seminars and workshop of ICTVTR, the DG said.

The labour minister referred to the proposal for renaming ICTVTR into Islamic Institute of Technology, now lying with the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) and appealed for its early approval. This would facilitate wider international recognition of the degrees and diplomas of the centre, he said.

Addressing the inaugural session, Director General of ICTVTR Prof A M Patwari said the centre, going to complete its 8th academic session this year, was started at the initiative of Shaheed President Ziaur Rah-

man on March 27, 1981.

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The centre is one of the few projects where cooperation among the member states of OIC has manifested itself into a concrete reality and it is a melting pot of Islamic ideals and culture with students and trainees from all over the Islamic World."

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Safat Ahmad Choudhury, MD and Actuary of Delta Life Insurance, handing over a cheque to Mrs Lakshmi Tanti at Kalighat Tea Garden in Srimangal recently to settle the death claim of M A Karim, EVP of the Delta Life were the special guests at the function, presided over by Ali Ashraf Chaudhuri, Manager of the tea garden.



Belal E Baaque (L) delivering a key-note speech at a discussion meeting on 'Possibilities for Rapid Economic Growth in Bangladesh' organised by the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) at the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel yesterday. Dr. Saleemul Huq (C) of BCAS and Morshed Khan, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister, are also seen in the picture. — Star photo

Israel intends to build new business jet

JERUSALEM, Jan 3: Israel intends to build a new business jet in collaboration with US and Russian firms, a spokesman for the Israeli Aviation Industry said Sunday, says AFP.

He said Galaxy, a new aircraft is called, would have US Pratt and Witney engines while its fuselage would be made by the Russian firm Yak. The US firm Rockwell Collins would be responsible for the avionics and the jet itself would be assembled in Israel, the spokesman said.

The Galaxy project is not new but is one which Israel wants to revive, the spokesman said.

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