

## **INDIA, MALAYSIA SIGN COMPREHENSIVE MARKET OPENING PACT**

A Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) was signed by India's Commerce Minister Mr. Anand Sharma and his Malaysian counterpart Mr. Mustapa Mohamed in the presence of Malaysian Prime Minister H. E. Najib Razak and several leading captains of industry from both G-15 countries. The agreement, which was reached after seven rounds of negotiation, will see Indian mangoes, cotton, motorcycles, trucks and basmati rice attract less duty in Malaysia, among other things. As a quid pro quo, Malaysia will face fewer barriers on the sale of its fruits, engineering goods and chemicals in India. Mr Sharma said the biggest benefit of the CECA was the doors being thrown open for trade in a wide range of services. These include professional services, telecommunications, research and development, transport, retail and environmental services. The pact includes provisions for freer movement of skilled professionals for IT, accounting, architecture and banking. The CECA will also allow increased cross-flows of investment in the services sector through the liberalisation of foreign equity limitations.

Source: Press Trust of India, 18 February 2011.

## **INDONESIA, MALAYSIA TO COOPERATE IN HEALTH SECTOR**

Indonesia and Malaysia signed a joint statement on cooperation in the health sector in Jakarta on 25 February 2011. The agreement covers communicable disease control, complementary and traditional medication, supervision of drug and cosmetic products, food product safety and quality control, improvement in health-related human resources and health research.

Following the signing of the statement, Indonesian Health Minister Endang Rahayu Sedyaningsih stated "As a follow-up, we are going to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) as a legal umbrella for the cooperation in the health sector between the governments of Indonesia and Malaysia."

Source: ANTARA News, 25 February 2011

## **ZIMBABWE, INDIA STRENGTHEN COOPERATION**

Bilateral relations between Zimbabwe and India were strengthened during the visit of Zimbabwe's Finance Minister to India in February 2011. In a bilateral meeting between Mr. Anand Sharma, India's Minister of Commerce & Industry and Mr. Tendai Biti, Finance Minister of Zimbabwe, in New Delhi on 24 February 2011, both sides noted the possibilities in science and technology cooperation, particularly in appropriate technologies in agriculture, agro-processing and renewable energy. Mr.

Sharma noted India's continued interest in education and capacity building programmes in Africa and in Zimbabwe in particular, through the "India-Zimbabwe SME Project" and by sponsoring Zimbabweans for study programmes under the ITEC and other courses. Mr. Sharma conveyed India's interest in cooperation with Zimbabwe in mining, power generation, railways, ICT and the agricultural sector in Zimbabwe.

India's exports to Zimbabwe during 2009-10 were US \$ 49 million and imports from Zimbabwe to India were US \$ 21 million. Major items exported by India to Zimbabwe are drugs, pharmaceuticals and fine chemicals, machinery & instruments, electronic goods and transport equipment. Major items imported by India from Zimbabwe are non-ferrous metals, raw cotton, crude minerals, pearls and precious/semi-precious stones.

Source: Press Information Bureau, 24 February 2011

## **MEXICO, BRAZIL TO HAVE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT**

The governments of Mexico and Brazil will begin formal negotiations on 28 February 2011 to reach a free-trade agreement. According to press reports citing Brazil's ambassador in Mexico, Sergio Florencio, Brazil would cut tariffs from 12.5 percent to zero, while Mexico would reduce duties from 5 percent to zero under the accord. Mexican President H.E. Felipe Calderon aims to strengthen economic relations with Latin America, Europe and Asia to reduce its dependence on the U.S., the destination for 80 percent of the nation's exports.

Source: [www.bilaterals.org](http://www.bilaterals.org), 11 February 2011

## **SRI LANKA INVITES INDONESIAN INVESTMENT IN FISHERIES SECTOR**

Sri Lanka has asked Indonesia to invest in the development of its fishery and maritime resource sector. The Indonesian Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Fadel Muhammad said the invitation was conveyed during his meeting with his Sri Lankan counterpart, Dr. Rajitna Serantne in January 2011. According to Indonesia's Director General of Fisheries, Sri Lanka has also asked Indonesia to cooperate in the management of fishery resources in the Indian Ocean, supply marine resource seeds to develop marine resource cultivation in coastal areas especially sea weeds, fingerlings and sea cucumber as well as transfer technology in ornamental fish breeding for nemo species and sea shrimps.

Source: ANTARA news, 2 February 2011