

MEDIA RELEASE

**MORE SINGAPORE EXPORTS TO INDIA WILL RECEIVE TARIFF
CONCESSIONS FROM 1ST NOVEMBER 2007 WITH SUCCESSFUL REVIEW OF
CECA**

More domestic exports from Singapore to India will receive tariff concessions targeted to start from 1 November 2007 following the successful review of the India Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA).

A team of senior officials led by Mr Peter Ong, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, met their Indian counterparts in New Delhi, India, today for the conclusion of the first review of the CECA agreement.

The review will see an overall increase from the current 64% to 81% in coverage of Singapore's domestic exports to India enjoying tariff concessions.

"I am pleased with the results of the tariff review. It is important to keep the CECA relevant as our bilateral economic relations with India evolve so that the business community from both sides can reap the full benefits of the CECA," said Mr Peter Ong. "Work in progress to keep improving the CECA will continue after the closure of this review."

Aside from cuts in tariff for exports, Singapore and India also agreed to establish a new Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for Indian medicinal products going into Singapore, which will, in time, reduce duplicate testing. In another effort to further facilitate trade, both sides worked to implement the MRAs on telecommunications, electrical and electronic equipment and for professionals.

Also on the agenda were banking provisions under CECA. The talks will expedite the granting of Qualifying Full Bank (QFB) licenses to Indian banks while facilitating Singapore banks' expansions and entry into India as provided for under the CECA.

CECA was concluded in June 2005 and entered into force on 1 August 2005. It is Singapore's first comprehensive bilateral economic agreement with a South Asian economy. Since the CECA was signed, trade with India has been increasing steadily, reaching a record S\$19.9 billion in 2006, a 20% increase over 2005. India is currently Singapore's 12th largest trading partner worldwide while Singapore is among India's 7th largest trading partners.

**MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY, SINGAPORE
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