



**WORKING GROUP VISIT TO  
DELHI AND KOLKATA  
29 APRIL - 3 MAY 2013**

<p><b>DRAFT REPORT</b></p>
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**Summary**

The European Parliament delegation for relations with India visited New Delhi and Kolkata from 29 April to 3 May 2013. The nine members were led by the Delegation Chair, Sir Graham Watson (ALDE, UK). Full details of the programme and the members are appended.

A major focus of the visit was the situation of women in India, following the much publicised case of a gang-rape and killing of a student in Delhi in December 2012 and the increased focus on the violence suffered by women in India that resulted from this tragic case. This had led to a resolution by the European Parliament on 17 January 2013 on the issue, which came a month after another plenary resolution on caste discrimination in India, which was also a focus of the visit.

Members discussed the situation of women with a number of interlocutors, including Mrs Kumari Selja, the Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment. They held meetings with representatives of civil society and also visited an EU-funded project aimed at empowering women with HIV/AIDS. They found that, although a great deal of legislation was already in place to promote equality and women's rights, there was a serious problem of implementation at grassroots level and it was essential to "sensitise" - or raise the awareness of - those in authority, such as the judiciary and the police. It was also vital that children be taught from an early age about the importance of respect for women. The particular problems faced by women from

lower castes and in conflict zones were also highlighted. Indian speakers outlined the new legislation to punish those guilty of crimes against women, as well as laws to boost female participation in politics by means of quotas.

It was stressed that in recent months there was more openness about the violence faced by women and an increased willingness on the part of victims to come forward and report this violence to the authorities. Social media had also played a role in mobilising society and making it less tolerant of attacks on women. Middle class citizens were particularly prominent in expressing anger at a political system that was not committed to addressing the concerns of ordinary people (as had also been the case over the anti-corruption movement).

The ongoing negotiations for an EU-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA) were also a major theme of the programme and the delegation included Mrs Maria Badia Cutchet (S&D, Spain), the standing rapporteur on the FTA. Meetings took place with parliamentarians (including members of the Committee on Commerce) and representatives of business to discuss the pertinent issues.

At the time of the visit it was hoped that there would be a summit in Brussels in early July, which would lead to a political agreement on the FTA by September. Both sides agreed that if agreement were not reached in the near future there would be a substantial delay - it was "now or in the medium to long term". India was moving into election mode (parliamentary elections must take place in the first half of next year, with March or April the most likely dates) and the EU was likely to focus on trade negotiations with Japan and the USA. Concerns were expressed that failure to reach agreement would put both the EU and India at a disadvantage against competitors, notably China.

A regular theme expressed by the Indian interlocutors was the threat posed to small scale Indian farmers - particularly in the dairy sector - by "subsidised" European agriculture. MEPs argued that the two agricultural sectors were largely complementary and that likely EU exports such as hard cheeses and pasta (along with wine and spirits) did not pose a threat to Indian farmers. The EP delegation also argued for a reduction in Indian tariffs on automobiles, in particular luxury cars which were subject to a 100% tariff. They also sought to address continuing Indian concerns that the FTA would have a detrimental affect on the provision of affordable generic medicines. MEPs made a general plea for both sides to show the political will necessary to achieve an ambitious agreement in the very near future that would represent a "win-win" outcome.

Both sides agreed that the relationship between the EU and India rested on far more than trade, as the two sides shared common values of respect for human rights and democracy. Cooperation should be strengthened to tackle many common foreign policy challenges, such as the threat of terrorism, maritime security and the situation in Afghanistan. The relationship should also be strengthened in areas such as people to people contacts (including more cooperation in the field of culture and educational exchanges). Visits to EU-funded projects during the week also provided further examples of cooperation between the two sides in a variety of fields.

A further theme of the visit and area for EU-India cooperation was in the field of climate policy and the environment and in the development of renewable energy. In line with this theme the delegation visited a project on eWaste collection and dismantling in Delhi (details below in main report).

The second part of the visit took place in West Bengal, which has a population of 91.3 million people and is India's fourth most populous state. The state had been governed by the Left Front [Communist Party of India (Marxist)] between 1977 and 2011. The current Trinamool Congress government was headed by the Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. There were discussion about the potential for European businesses to invest in the region and the bureaucratic obstacles that were faced. Other problems in West Bengal included the poor infrastructure and the shortage of qualified workers. Members visited Metro Cash & Carry, which was an example of a European company which had succeeded in investing in West Bengal. Representatives of the state government and local business stressed that they should also be consulted on the negotiations so that they would buy into the final agreement.

Members were briefed on the situation in regions affected by insurgencies, particularly the north eastern states, during meetings with the ECHO India office and some of their implementing partners. The wish was expressed by a number of MEPs to renew the request to the Indian authorities to travel to Manipur.

There was no further development on the establishment of the EU Friendship Group in the Indian Parliament. The meeting requested with Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar did not materialise because of the turbulent parliamentary atmosphere. Mrs Kumar is, however, scheduled to visit the European Parliament on 8 and 9 July 2013. In the course of the week members briefed their Indian counterparts and other interlocutors on current developments in the EU.

Other issues raised included the death penalty in India, with MEPs expressing deep concern at the recent resumption of executions after a *de facto* moratorium. The Indian side responded that this was an internal matter and that the ultimate punishment was only used in the "rarest of rare" cases. Indian interlocutors also cited strong public support for capital punishment.

### **Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 April 2013**

The participants arrived on 27 and 28 April 2013. An informal meeting was held at 1830hrs on Sunday 28 April at which the latest version of the programme was circulated and members were briefed on the practical details by a representative of the EU Delegation in New Delhi.

**Monday 29 April 2013 - Delhi**

09.30 -10.45            Briefing at the EU Delegation by Head of Delegation  
*Venue :            EU Delegation, 65, Golf Links*

The delegation was briefed by the Head of the EU Delegation to India, Ambassador Joao Cravinho. Topics covered included EU-India relations, and in particular the FTA; the current political situation in India, including the problem of corruption; the situation of women in India in the aftermath of the Delhi rape/murder case; other human rights issues, in particular the resumption of the use of the death penalty; the current situation regarding Kashmir; and political developments in West Bengal.

11.00 - 11.45            Meeting with **H.E. Ms Preeti Kaur**, Minister of State for  
External Affairs  
*Venue :            South Block - Gate 4*

Both sides underlined the importance of the EU-India relationship and the significance of the strategic partnership. Stress was laid on the shared values of democracy, pluralism and respect for the rule of law and human rights. The wide range of areas of cooperation was also noted, including trade, security, education, culture and renewable energy.

Ms Kaur welcomed the focus of the delegation on women's issues and stressed that many of the problems had been present since "time immemorial". However, she stressed, it was "totally unacceptable" that these problems persisted. The recent rape case in Delhi had shocked everyone and had brought the issue to people's attention. It was clear that people were now more inclined to report incidents. The Minister pointed to the introduction of legislation in March 2013 to impose stronger penalties on those men - who were "sick in the mind" - who attacked women. She argued that the new sanctions would deter at least some of those criminals.

Ms Kaur noted that a bill was pending on reserving a 33% quota for female representation in the Lok Sabha and all state assemblies. The legislation had passed the Rajya Sabha in March 2010 but still awaited the endorsement of the Lok Sabha. She also pointed to the constitutional amendment of 1993 that had reserved one third of seats in India's village governing bodies for women.

Turning to other issues, the Minister stressed that Iran was a significant trading partner of India and that there were also long-established and wide-ranging ties between the two countries. She pointed to the continuing importance to India of Iranian energy imports, although she stressed that it was seeking to diversify its supplies. New Delhi adhered to the United Nations sanctions resolutions and believed that Iran had to fulfil its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), while having the right to develop nuclear power for peaceful purposes. Ms Kaur stressed that these same strictures should equally apply to North Korea.

Finally Ms Kaur emphasised the importance of ensuring that Afghanistan did not slide back into the situation prior to the NATO-led invasion and become a haven for terrorists, who could threaten India as well as other countries. It was therefore essential that the country was provided with adequate assistance programmes to support it after the departure of the NATO troops.

11.45                      Transfer to Shastri Bhavan, C Wing, gate 6

12.00 - 12.45            Meeting with **Hon. Selja Kumari , Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment**

Ms Selja stressed that the new legislation increasing penalties for rape sent out a strong message that the Indian government was determined to tackle the problem. There had been a debate about whether the legislation should be gender-neutral or gender-specific but it was decided to make it gender-specific. There was also separate legislation targeted at violence against children. She noted that many attacks on women were still taking place, however greater numbers were being reported because of increased transparency. There was also more emphasis on educating children to show respect for women.

The Minister argued that the existing legislation to tackle crimes against women was already very far-reaching but that there had been a problem of implementation. The new law placed more responsibility on police officers to take action when cases of rape or violence were brought to their attention. It was important to sensitise individual officers, while recognising that they were working under huge pressure and stress.

She stressed that the new law introduced the death penalty for repeat offenders and underlined that there had never been a moratorium on capital punishment in India, however some cases had been held up in the past because of the lack of Presidential assent. She could not say, however, whether the current legislative change would lead to more executions taking place.

Ms Selja noted that the government was working closely with NGOs in order to gain more information about the situation confronting women. Nevertheless she argued forcefully that - although it was "very fashionable to knock" politicians - they were also "elected from the grass roots" and had "to deal with the people every day". She asked rhetorically what checks applied to social activists.

The Minister also referred to the legislation in place to ensure that a minimum of 3% of jobs were reserved for people with disabilities. She gave details of special schools and vocational training centres for people with disabilities, while stressing that there were also efforts to make all schools inclusive. She also noted that amendments were being proposed to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act to improve the registration of incidents and conviction of offenders; however this had been affected by the frequent disruption of proceedings in the current plenary session.



(where over 700,000 people are directly affected by the conflict); the Naxalite insurgency (over 50,000 people directly affected in Chhattisgarh and over 50,000 IDPs). It also gave an overview of the problem of under-nutrition in India where one third of the world's malnourished children live - indeed the issue had been identified by Prime Minister Singh as one of the major challenges facing India. In the current year DG ECHO was providing EUR 6 million through its 2013 Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) and EUR 0.7 million through its Disaster Preparedness (DIPECHO) programme in 2013-14. The ECHO office had only 25 staff of whom only three worked full time on India.

Key messages were that there is much suffering and loss of life in India - particular mention was made of the widespread use of rape in the many conflicts in parts of the country -and that the voices of the innocent civilians living in war-zones were not being heard. The issues that ECHO was dealing with were not being addressed in the framework of the EU-India dialogue and "New Delhi" was very far away from the problems. Appropriate legislation was in force but there was a huge problem of implementation. Social media had become a major player in galvanising public awareness about the widespread problem of rapes and the issue was now being discussed more openly. This had led to an increase in protests and calls for the government to take more effective action.

20.00 - 22.30            Working dinner with the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)**, hosted by **Sir Graham Watson**, Chair of the European Parliament Delegation for Relations with India  
*Venue :            Villa Medici Restaurant  
                         Top floor Taj Hotel*

FICCI has provided a valuable forum for interaction between parliamentarians on the two sides, in the absence of a formal EU Friendship Group in the Indian Parliament. . Discussion during the dinner covered a wide range of issues within the framework of EU-India relations, particularly economic cooperation, migration & nobility, and women's issues.

**Tuesday 30 April 2013 - Delhi**

09.30                    Drive to eWaste project

10.30 -12.30            **Switch Asia E Waste Project Visit.**

*Venue :            Jhilmil Industrial Area, Delhi*

The project aims to improve the situation of e-waste management in India in large urban conglomerations. It receives EUR 1.6 million in funding in the four year period from 2010 to 2014 and covers four urban centres, including Delhi.

Members visited two small and medium enterprises (SMEs) involved in recycling e-waste. They then attended a presentation by the project managers at the collection and dismantling site

A key aim of the project has been to bring the informal sector SMEs into the mainstream recycling of e-waste - the creation of a "formalised informal sector" Currently 90% of recycling took place in the informal sector. The SMEs visited had originally been working in the informal sector and had now been helped to get formal authorisation from the Delhi Pollution Control Board. This involved - inter alia - training to ensure proper collection and disposal of e-waste, including raising the awareness among the mostly unskilled workers about occupational health and safety.

The process of "formalisation" would lead to less harassment by the police, more social acceptance and greater awareness of health and safety.

12.45 - 13.30            **TRANSFER TO HOTEL**

15.00                    **TRANSFER TO PARLIAMENT HOUSE**

15.10                    Visit of Parliament House

The delegation was taken on a tour of Parliament House, including a visit to the two plenary chambers.

16.00 - 17.00            Meeting with **Mr Shanta Kumar**, MP (Rajya Sabha), Chair of the Committee on Commerce, and Committee Members  
*Venue :            Room no. 63, 1st floor  
                         Parliament House - Gate 12*

Mr Kumar opened the meeting with an overview of the committee system in the Indian Parliament. It was stressed that interaction between parliamentarians was of great value.

The EP delegation underlined that after six years the EU and India were at a critical stage in the negotiations on the FTA and it was highly desirable for an agreement to be signed as soon as possible. There was a concern that it was a matter of "now or several years later".

MEPs stressed that the European Parliament had always insisted on effective data protection - indeed this had led to problems with the USA - and they hoped that this element could be accommodated. They stressed, however, that nothing in the chapter on IPR would prevent access to affordable medicines. The Indian side stressed that India was TRIPS-compliant and that they did not see any need to go further.

MEPs argued that the agreement was not simply about trade and would enable both sides to respond more effectively to a globalised world. They were concerned that



there was not enough talk about the positive aspects of the FTA and they feared that failure to achieve an agreement would only benefit China.

The Indian side expressed concerns about the potential threat to the livelihood of small scale Indian farmers from the EU's "highly subsidised" agricultural production - particularly dairy products, which were a very significant source of income for marginal farmers. The EP side responded that much of EU-Indian trade was complementary and that European exports, such as hard cheeses and pasta (and also chocolate and wine & spirits) would not compete with Indian products. MEPs did not consider that European exports of dairy products would pose a risk to Indian farmers. They stressed that it was important that politicians on both sides demonstrated the will to push things forward.

There were concerns, too, from the Indian side about the "threat" posed by the European automobile industry to Indian car manufacturers. MEPs stressed that both sides could benefit from an increased two-way trade in automobiles. They stressed the importance of reducing India's tariffs on imports of luxury cars which currently stood at 100%.

Referring to the FTAs that were already in place between India and other countries, the Indian side argued that - in their opinion - these agreements had generally benefited the trading partner rather than India. They stressed too their view that all stakeholders involved in the FTA should be consulted - including the Committee on Commerce.

17.00 Meeting with **Hon. Dr Karan. Singh**, External Affairs Committee and Committee Members  
*Venue: Parliament House.*

The EP delegation opened the discussion by expressing regret at the resumption of executions in India. They then underlined hopes that an expansion of trade relations would help to enhance the broader relationship and provide a counterweight to China. Emphasis was laid on developing cultural and people to people ties (such as Euro-India) and building a "coalition of peace". The Indian side gave details of the Indian development cooperation model and its focus on private sector investment, in contrast to the "all Chinese" approach of China's overseas development cooperation.

MEPs outlined the steps taken by the EU to tackle the financial and economic crisis and argued that there was now a much stronger base for the euro. The Indian side applauded the steps taken by the EU towards building stability in Europe - it was "the biggest miracle that had ever happened in this generation". They hoped that similar progress might be made in South Asia, particularly within the framework of SAARC, which had not lived up to its potential and where the focus was always on India Pakistan relations.

The Indian speakers expressed their deep concerns about the situation regarding North Korea and agreed that "something needed to be done" and that Beijing should play a positive role. Indian MPs stressed that their country had enjoyed "very good relations" with Iran for 2,000 years, although they recognised that Tehran should adhere to its

obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The situation in Syria was "an absolute disaster" and was "getting worse by the day". There was a fear that it could escalate into something larger.

Concern was expressed by the Indian side about the steps taken by China to build a series of dams on the river Brahmaputra. Indian MPs asked whether the EU might be able to bring pressure to bear on China in this respect. MEPs recognised that rivers could be a source of conflict, whereas they could be used as a source of peace and there were strong arguments in favour of common management of shared natural resources

The Indian side concluded by raising the issue of representation on the United Nations Security Council which was "frozen in 1945" and did not reflect the current world order.

19.30 - 22.30 Working dinner on the theme of women's rights, hosted by the EU Delegation

*Venue: Library Lounge  
Lodhi Hotel*

MEPs discussed the situation of women's rights with leading civil society representatives. Speakers pointed out that there was a huge gap between the legislation that was being introduced to combat crimes against women and the implementation at grassroots level, where the situation was "very grim" Many women had difficulties in gaining access to adequate health services and - for example - most abortions took place outside the public health system. One particular area of concern that was cited was the widespread phenomenon of marital rape.

Speakers argued that the police were often corrupt and did not take effective measures to protect women. Stress was laid on the need for increased education and awareness-raising among police and the need for "all women police stations" where victims of violence would feel less threatened.

Particular emphasis was also laid on the problems faced by women in conflict zones (particularly Manipur and the rest of the northeast) where there was a heightened danger of rape by the military and where women had little opportunity for redress because of the provisions of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act. There was also stress on the situation of women from the Dalit community and a strong welcome for the European Parliament resolution on caste discrimination that had been adopted in December 2012.

### **Wednesday 1 May 2013 - Kolkata**

06.30 DEPARTURE FROM HOTEL TO AIRPORT

09.10 Flight to Kolkata on JetKonnnect 9W7105

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## Visit to the TREC/STEP project "Incubating New Emerging Technology (NET) Skills by creating sustainable models of NET Skill Package"

The delegation travelled to Kolkata in the morning and went directly from the airport to the TREC-STEP project, which was located at the Vivekananda Institute of Biotechnology (VIB) at Nimpith, some 75 kilometres from Kolkata. On arrival they listened to a presentation on the project.

The project aims to provide training for marginalised and vulnerable youth in such specific skills as biotechnology, home appliances and computer/mobile servicing, in order to assist them to find employment or to start their own small business. It was intended that successful trainees would be in a position to set up businesses in their own locality, rather than being obliged to move away.

It was reported that the project has "reached out to the unreached" and 3,000 young people have been trained as "technicians of the future". Many of these young people had not previously benefited from regular education or employment and there was therefore an additional need to address issues such as punctuality. The project sought to involve the trainees' families closely in the whole process. The trainees were generally between 15 and 20 years of age and 34% were female (thus exceeding the initial target of 25%). The courses lasted a total of 180 to 190 hours and involved three to four hours training a week. Course material was in English but the training and the teachers' notes were in Bengali. The trainer-trainee relationship did not end with the conclusion of the formal course and ongoing support continued to be provided to the trainees.

Although the MEPs were visiting a centre within two hours drive of Kolkata, it covered a much larger area where many communities were very isolated. Indeed many trainees had previously never been outside their villages and it was noted that there were 54 islands in the region that were only accessible by boat. The project workers went from the centre into more remote areas to run training *in situ* where this was possible

The project has run in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, lasting from 2009 to 2012. It is co-financed with the Indian Department of Science and Technology with an EU contribution of EUR 1 million (90% of the funding).

Following the presentation, the MEPs heard from a number of the successful trainees who detailed how the training had benefited them. The delegation then returned to Kolkata.

### Thursday 2 May 2013 - Kolkata

08.30 - 09.30      Working breakfast with the European Business and  
Technology Centre (EBTC)  
Venue :      *Taj Bengal Hotel*  
                  *Portico Hal*

09.45 - 10.00            Visit of the EBTC offices

The EP Delegation was briefed on the work carried out in Kolkata by the European Business and Technology Centre (EBTC). EBTC officials noted - inter alia - that they tended to go "deeper rather than wider" and to focus on particular groups of companies. They sought to assist European companies planning to operate in India, particularly in dealing with such challenges as the bureaucracy. They noted that most European SMEs worked with partners in India, although some set up on their own. One of the major areas of activity was in the development of renewable technology.

Following the visit the EP delegation made a short visit to the EBTC offices in the Bengal Chamber of Commerce building.

10.05 - 11.15            Presentation on ECHO activities in North East India, with participation of implementing partners  
*Venue :            Meeting room at the Bengal Chamber of Commerce*

The EP delegation was informed about the activities of ECHO in North East India and was given an overview of the current situation in the region. This presentation had a major focus on the effects on women of the conflict in the northeast states, particularly in Manipur.

The north eastern states (or "seven sisters") were the home to around 45 million people made up of 70 major population groups, speaking roughly 400 languages and dialects. 98% of the region's borders were with other countries and the area was plagued with "small wars and insurgencies" which brought with them "small arms, narcotics ...and weapons of all types".

The local population was in a very vulnerable situation being caught between the army and the insurgents. The insurgents had easy access to arms and were also often involved in drug trafficking. The Indian army largely had a free hand as the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act applied in much of the region, and gave soldiers extremely wide-ranging powers, often resulting in major human rights abuses.

The conflicts - some of which dated back to 1947 - were entrenched and were fuelled by poverty and unemployment. Speakers asked the MEPs to raise the situation in the north east in their meetings with Indian parliamentarians. The EP delegation expressed deep concern about the situation - particularly the widespread use of small arms which were described as "weapons of mass destruction. The view was expressed by both speakers and MEPs that the EP Delegation should make renewed efforts to visit Manipur - a previous effort to travel to the region not having been successful.

11.30 - 12.30            Meeting with **Mr Biman Banerjee**, Speaker State Legislative Assembly and Ministers in the State Government

The MEPs had an exchange of views with the Mr Biman Banerjee, Speaker of the State Legislative Assembly and a number of Ministers and leading members of the Assembly.

The State Minister of Economy, Mr Amit Mitra outlined the division of powers between the state and the central government, noting that 32% of total tax revenue went to the states. West Bengal was a net contributor to the national exchequer as \$8 billion was sent from Kolkata to the centre, of which it received \$4 billion back following negotiations within the Finance Commission. The annual GDP growth rate was above the national average and stood at around 8%, particularly in agriculture. There had been a 30% increase in tax collection without raising taxes, thanks mainly to electronic tax registration and payment of tax refunds. The Minister also stressed the need for a reform of the tax collection system to increase re-transfers from the centre to the states.

Further discussion focussed on the EU-India FTA, with a majority on both sides agreeing that the achievement of an agreement could and should benefit both sides.

The MEPs subsequently toured the Assembly buildings and were hosted to lunch by the Speaker.

14.30 -16.00            Tour of Kolkata

The EP delegation visited the adjacent Town Hall and museum. This was followed by a visit to the Victoria Memorial. They then travelled to the Metro Cash & Carry.

17.00 - 18.00            Visit of Metro cash & carry site near Kolkata

The Metro Cash and Carry operation was selected for a visit as a "success story" of European Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India. It is a 100% owned division of METRO AG, the German trade and retail conglomerate.

MEPs toured the site and then attended a presentation by Metro staff. They were informed that Metro Cash & Carry began its Indian operations in Bangalore in 2003 and opened its Kolkata branch in 2008. It currently had 15 centres in India and was still expanding. The Kolkata branch covered 6,700 square metres and was strategically located on the bypass linking the city centre to the airport.

Large scale retail stores are relative newcomers to India (although both Carrefour and Tesco are planning to expand) and Metro staff stressed the need to gain acceptance from the local population. Metro did not sell direct to the general public but supplied customer groups such as hotels, restaurants, caterers, traders and other business professionals. Staff noted that the accelerated supply of foodstuffs to the end user led to less waste. They had not yet begun to recycle electrical goods.

Metro staff also stressed the benefits to the local community of the store, noting that up to 90% of the goods were "local" (i.e. from India). They reported high levels of staff satisfaction and very few employees resigning. Female employees were not

required to work after 7pm. Staff had quarterly health check-ups and guaranteed annual leave. In addition they were encouraged to bring their families to visit the workplace.

19.00 - 20.00           DRIVE TO TAJ BENGAL HOTEL

20.30 - 22.30           Working dinner hosted by European Parliament  
Delegation for Relations with India European Business and  
Technology Centre (EBTC), EU Member States  
Representatives and business present in Kolkata  
*Venue :           Taj Bengal Hotel*

Many of the themes discussed throughout the week were raised again during the dinner. Speakers stressed that red tape - such as over-rigid labour laws - created problems for European businesses wanting to set up in India. There was also reference to the requirement for foreign companies to obtain approval for setting up operations from separate ministries, which were often "at loggerheads" and sometimes had conflicting requirements.

Both sides noted that "success stories" about European companies doing well in India, would encourage others to set up in the country. More contacts between chambers of commerce and increased provision of information would also be very beneficial. It was important that European businesses did not ignore the role of the state governments in the process of attracting business. West Bengal had not been in the lead among Indian states in attracting inward investment in the past as, partly as a result of an unfavourable political climate but also because of the strong focus on agriculture - the state was "too fertile".

It was generally agreed that "the world is not stopping" and the EU and India had to ensure that "they were not left behind": the FTA would be an important step in this process. MEPs stressed again that European agriculture did not represent a threat to Indian farming as the sectors were largely complementary.

Some European diplomatic representatives pointed to their fast-track policy in issuing long-term business visas for the Schengen zone and rejected complaints of delays in this process.

**Friday 3 May 2013 - Kolkata**

08.45                   DEPARTURE FROM HOTEL

09.30 -10.30           Visit of the project Solidarity and Action against HIV  
infection of India (SAATHI)

Anti-Retroviral Centre, School of Tropical Medicine in  
Kolkata.

The project "Empowering Women Affected and Infected by HIV through Property Ownership and Legal Literacy" has assisted 18,000 women in eight states, including West Bengal. EU funding has amounted to EUR 323,278 for a 40 month period from January 2010 to April 2013. Although the funding is time-bound the set-up is permanent.

MEPs met medical officers and women's rights educators, as well as women who had benefited from the project. They learned of the social stigma faced by women who have contracted HIV/AIDS, which was reinforced by religious taboos. Illiteracy and a lack of awareness of legal rights compounded the problem, particularly for those women who were forced to leave the marital home on the death of their husbands). Domestic violence too was a recurrent problem in many families. The project also aimed at sensitising judges and other representatives of the authorities in order to increase awareness of problems faced. Women who had already benefited from the project were encouraged to provide guidance based on their own experience.

It was noted that mandatory testing for HIV/AIDS now took place during the early stages of pregnancy and that all patients' records were computerised. Reference was also made to the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS among the transsexual community - a problem which was barely acknowledged. Finally, project workers expressed concern that an EU-India FTA might lead to an increase in the cost of medicines for the most vulnerable people in India.

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Annexes : programma + list of participants



**WORKING GROUP VISIT TO  
DELHI AND KOLKATA  
29 APRIL - 3 MAY 2013**

**FINAL PROGRAMME**

**Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 April 2013**

Individual arrivals of Members and Staff

*Accommodation : Taj Mahal Hotel  
Number One, Mansingh Road  
New Delhi 110011  
Tel. +91 11 230 261 62*

**Sunday 28 April 2013 - Delhi**

18.00 Informal briefing Secretariat  
18.30 Informal EP Delegation meeting  
Meet in hotel lobby



**Monday 29 April 2013 - Delhi**

- 09.00 DEPARTURE FROM HOTEL TO EU DELEGATION
- 09.30 - 10.45 Briefing at the EU Delegation by Head of Delegation  
*Venue : EU Delegation, 65, Golf Links*
- 10.45 TRANSFER TO SOUTH BLOCK
- 11.00 - 11.45 Meeting with **H.E. Ms Preneet Kaur**, Minister of State for External Affairs  
*Venue : South Block - Gate 4*
- 11.45 Transfer to Shastri Bhavan, C Wing, gate 6
- 12.00 - 12.45 Meeting with **Hon. Kumari Selja, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment**
- 12.45 TRANSFER TO IMPERIAL HOTEL
- 12.45 - 15.00 Lunch with the Confederation of India Industry (CII), hosted by **Sir Graham Watson**, Chair of the European Parliament Delegation for Relations with India  
*Venue : Daniell's Tavern  
Imperial Hotel  
Janpath, New Delhi*
- 15.00 TRANSFER TO ECHO OFFICE
- 15.30 - 16.30 ECHO presentation on Malnutrition and Internal Conflicts in India  
*Venue : ECHO Offices*
- 17.00 Free time/bilateral meetings with representatives of Member State Embassies in Delhi
- 20.00 - 22.30 Working dinner with the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)**, hosted by **Sir Graham Watson**, Chair of the European Parliament Delegation for Relations with India  
*Venue : Villa Medici Restaurant  
Top floor Taj Hotel*

**Tuesday 30 April 2013 - Delhi**

- 09.30 Drive to eWaste project
- 10.30 -12.30 **Switch Asia E Waste Project Visit.**  
**Visit to informal dismantling facilities on e-waste.**  
Presentation of the project. Interaction with project managers.
- 12.45 - 13.30 **TRANSFER TO HOTEL**
- 15.00 **TRANSFER TO PARLIAMENT HOUSE**
- 15.10 Visit of Parliament House
- 16.00 - 17.00 Meeting with **Mr Shanta Kumar**, MP (Rajya Sabha), Chair of the Committee on Commerce, and Committee Members  
*Venue : Room no. 63, 1st floor  
Parliament House - Gate 12*
- 17.00 Meeting with **Hon. Anand Kumar**, MP (Lok Sabha), Chairman of the External Affairs Committee and Committee Members  
*Venue: Parliament House*
- 18.00 TRANSFER TO HOTEL
- 19.15 DEPARTURE FROM HOTEL FOR
- 19.30 - 22.30 Working dinner on the theme of women's rights, hosted by the EU Delegation  
*Venue: Library Lounge  
Lodhi Hotel*

**Wednesday 1 May 2013 - Kolkata**

- 06.30 DEPARTURE FROM HOTEL TO AIRPORT
- 09.10 Flight to Kolkata on JetKonnnect 9W7105
- 11.15 Arrival in Kolkata

- 11.45 - 13.45 Drive to TrecStep Project
- 14.00 -14.45 Lunch and presentation of TrecStep Project  
*Venue : Project location in Nimpith  
 District South, 24 Parganas*
- 15.00- 17.00 Visit of TREC-STEP Project (vocational education) -  
 Laboratories where young adults are trained in bio-  
 technologies
- 17.00 - 19.00 Drive back to Kolkata
- Accommodation: Taj Bengal Hotel  
 34-B Belvedere Road - Alipore  
 Kolkata 700 027*
- Evening free for own arrangements

**Thursday 2 May 2013 - Kolkata**

- 08.30 - 09.30 Working breakfast with the European Business and  
 Technology Centre (EBTC)  
*Venue : Taj Bengal Hotel  
 Portico Hall*
- 09.30 - 09.45 Drive to EBTC offices
- 09.45 - 10.00 Visit of the EBTC offices
- 10.00 WALK TO BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
- 10.05 - 11.15 Presentation on ECHO activities in North East India, with  
 participation of implementing partners  
*Venue : Meeting room at the Bengal Chamber of  
 Commerce*
- 11.15 TRANSFER TO STATE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
- 11.30 - 12.30 Meeting with **Mr Biman Banerjee**, Speaker State  
 Legislative Assembly and Ministers in the State Government
- 12.30 Guided visit of the State Legislative Assembly

13.30 - 14.30	Lunch hosted by the State Legislative Assembly
14.30 -16.00	Visit by bus of Kolkata
16.00 - 16.45	DRIVE TO MAKRO/METRO SITE
18.00 - 19.00	Visit of Makro Metro site near Kolkata
19.00 - 20.00	DRIVE TO TAJ BENGAL HOTEL
20.30 - 22.30	Working dinner hosted by European Parliament Delegation for Relations with India European Business and Technology Centre (EBTC), EU Member States Representatives and business present in Kolkata <i>Venue : Taj Bengal Hotel Crystal Hall</i>

<b>Friday 3 May 2013 - Kolkata</b>
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08.45	DEPARTURE FROM HOTEL
09.00 -11.00	Visit of the project Solidarity and Action against HIV infection of India (SAATHI) Interaction with medical officer, women's rights educators and project beneficiaries <i>Venue : Anti-Retroviral Centre, School of Tropical Medicine, Kolkata</i>
11.00	DRIVE BACK TO TAJ BENGAL HOTEL  Lunch own arrangements
Afternoon	Free time
1630	Group departure to airport for onward travel to Europe

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*Delegation for relations with India***WORKING GROUP VISIT TO DELHI AND KOLKATA  
29 April - 3 May 2013****PARTICIPANTS LIST****MEMBERS**

Sir Graham WATSON, Chair	ALDE	United Kingdom
Ms Lena KOLARSKA-BOBIŃSKA, 2nd Vice-Chair	EPP	Poland
Ms Birgit COLLIN-LANGEN	EPP	Germany
Ms Kinga GÁL, Substitute Member	EPP	Hungary
Mr Thomas MANN, Substitute Member	EPP	Germany
Mr Jo LEINEN	S&D	Germany
Ms Maria BADIA I CUTCHET, Rapporteur	S&D	Spain
Ms Anthea McINTYRE	ECR	United Kingdom
Mr Matteo SALVINI	EFD	Italy

**SECRETARIAT**

Mr Tim BODEN, Head of Secretariat  
Ms Emma MOLLET, Administrative Assistant

**POLITICAL GROUPS**

Ms Joanna JARECKA-GOMEZ, EPP  
Mr Christopher WILLIAMS, S&D  
Ms Urša PONDELEK, ALDE

**ACCOMPANYING PERSON**

Mr Andrea CRIPPA, assistant to Mr Salvini