

## Trade pact, climate change, terror to top India-EU summit

India and the 27-nation European Union will Friday hold their 10th summit that is expected to give a much-needed impetus to a proposed trade pact and expand cooperation in areas ranging from counter-terrorism and the global financial crisis to energy security and climate change.

The daylong India-EU summit is expected to give a decisive political push to negotiations over the long-deliberated, broadbased trade and investment pacts that are currently dragging due to differences over the EU's bid to bring in non-trade issues into the talks.

The political summit will be preceded by an annual India-EU business conclave that will bring together top business leaders from the two sides to discuss issues relating to the global financial meltdown and ways to scale up two-way trade and investment. The two sides had agreed to double bilateral trade to 100 billion euros in five years at the summit in Marseilles last year.

Ahead of the talks, Daniele Smadja, ambassador and head of the EU delegation in New Delhi, said last week that non-trade issues like child labour and environment are key policy concerns and need to be addressed within the framework of the free trade agreement or FTA talks between India and the European Union.

India has voiced reservations over non-trade issues as it feels it's a ploy of developed countries to undercut its competitiveness. The two sides have held seven rounds of talks, but the negotiations are proving to be difficult.

With less than a month to go before the UN summit on climate change in Copenhagen, global warming will be another major topic of discussion.

The EU is expected to make another push to bring India closer to its stance on climate change.

The EU summit last week agreed that rich countries should give developing nations up to 50 billion euros a year by 2020 to help them fight climate change, but did not state how much the 27-nation bloc was willing to contribute. India has consistently advocated the principle that developed countries have to pay for the global warming they had caused.

The two sides will also discuss greater institutional linkages in combating terrorism. The sharp spike in terrorist attacks in Pakistan and the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan, where the US and NATO forces are battling a resurgent Taliban, will also figure in the discussions.

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