

EU, India plan corpus for nano-technology research

India and the European Commission (EC), a governing body of the European Union (EU), will set up a corpus fund of euro 10 million (Rs.576.7 million) for research in nano-technology, a top EC official said here Wednesday.

'We are for a joint call, which will focus on collaborative research. The effort will receive support of about euro 5 million (Rs.288.4 million) from each party,' EC director general (research) Jose M.S. Rodriguez told reporters.

'Through this initiative, best institutions in India and the EU will have the opportunity to work together in this important field,' Rodriguez added.

Project funding may start as early as May 2008.

'We are meeting Finance Minister P. Chidambaram and Science and Technology Minister Kapil Sibal to decide finer nuances of the research areas,' said Nicholas Hartley, acting head of Industrial Technology of EC.

'Both the EU and India have enormous potential in this field. We have not signed any such agreement with any other country. We have a lot in common and thus have mutual respect for each other,' he said, without spelling out further details.

Rodriguez is currently in [New Delhi](#) to participate in the fourth EU-India Science and Technology Cooperation Steering Committee meeting Thursday.

At the meeting, the committee intends to finalise details of the first EU-India coordinated call for proposals.

Rodriguez said besides computational material science, climate change, environment issues and energy would also be discussed.

When asked about plans for talks on nuclear energy, he said: 'We have some limitations on nuclear fission issues. To be frank, we have logically less level of ambition in this field.'

The meeting will also try to renew EU-India science cooperation for another five years. The issue will be discussed in a meeting scheduled Nov 30 here.

India is already an important partner for the EU in its research framework programme. Already 100 Indian research institutions have participated in more than 80 research projects.

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