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Turkey awaits India's nod on FTA

HYDERABAD: Turkey is keen on starting negotiations on a free trade agreement with India aimed at boosting bilateral trade. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a function, Turkish Ambassador to India Burak Akcapar said,

"We have already completed the joint study of trade which recommended that there is a lot of benefit for both the countries. We are yet to sign that joint study and launch negotiations.

"We are waiting for the Indian colleagues to give us a date for signing the joint study. I cannot guess when it is going to take place."

The envoy said bilateral trade between both the countries has crossed \$7 billion in 2011 against \$4 billion in 2010.

"I think through economic partnership of free-trade agreement (FTA), the flood-gates will open both the directions and the trade will go leaps and bounds," he said.

Akcapar said Ankara has also sought permission from the Indian authorities to have direct flight connectivity between Istanbul and Indian cities of Hyderabad, Chennai, Amritsar, Bangalore and Kolkata, besides doubling the number of flights currently operated

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BURAK AKCAPAR

Turkish ambassador to India

from Delhi and Mumbai.

Turkey has also sought permission to open consulates in Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore and may appoint honorary consuls until a they open full pledged offices. "We need to get permission to appoint honorary consuls from the host country. There is limit to that. I think it is four honorary consuls. Currently we have in Kolkata and Chennai," the diplomat said.

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