

2010-09-03 12:03:03 by webmaster

03 SEP 2010

Times of India

BRUSSELS: The European Union began to disburse on Thursday 264 million euros in aid to help 19 of the most vulnerable African, Caribbean and Pacific countries cope with the global economic crisis.

The funding is the second part of a 500-million-euro (640-million-dollar) programme launched last year to help countries "most affected by the crisis due to their poor resilience to external shocks," the European Commission said.

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