RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 36
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

REVENUE EARNED ON TOBACCO PRODUCTS

*36. SHRI DHIRAJ PRASAD SAHU:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) the total revenue earned by Government on tobacco products during each of the last three years;
b) whether tobacco production has declined in the country during past years; and
c) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

*****

a) to c): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.
STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 36 FOR ANSWER ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015 REGARDING “REVENUE EARNED ON TOBACCO PRODUCTS”

(a) The Central Excise revenue earned by the Government on tobacco products during each of the last three years is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Revenue (Rs. in crore)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>19892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>17855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>19255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Department of Revenue)

(b) & (c) The Flue Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco which is export worthy and constitutes around 37% of overall tobacco cultivation of around 800 million kgs is a highly regulated crop and is subjected to stringent restrictions on extent of area planted, quantity of tobacco produced and cured by the Tobacco Board as per their mandate given by the Tobacco Board Act, 1975. The details of FCV production during the past five years is as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Production (in million kg.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>301.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>266.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>270.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>315.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>293.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Tobacco Board)

The FCV production in India has shown declining trend during 2011-12, 2012-13 & 2014-15.

*****
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 321
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

AGREEMENTS MADE ON IP IN RCEP MEETINGS IN MALAYSIA

321. PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) the details of the agreements made on Intellectual Property (IP) during the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Inter-Sessional Ministerial Meetings in Malaysia from July 12-14, 2015;
b) whether the Ministry has taken cognizance of the concerns raised by Civil Society about India's engagement with the RCEP trade deal; and

c) whether the agreements would in any way affect the supply of medicines India makes to Medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF), and towards its own recently launched Jan Aushadhi Scheme and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

*****

a) No agreement has been made on Intellectual Property (IP) during the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Inter-Sessional Meeting in Malaysia from July 12-14, 2015.

b) The Ministry has been negotiating the intellectual property provisions of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) on the basis of the national legislations on intellectual property and the provisions of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) under the World Trade Organization (WTO).

c) In view of (a) above, it does not arise.

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Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether Government has received proposals on bilateral trade from the neighbouring countries;

b) if so, the details thereof; and

c) the terms and conditions of Government to spread the Indian business in the neighbouring countries?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) (SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

*****

(a) No Sir, the government has not received any specific proposal on bilateral trade from any neighbouring country.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) There are appropriate institutional mechanisms such as Joint Working Group and Committee of Experts established with neighbouring countries to discuss and strengthen bilateral trade relations with a view to spread the Indian business across the border.

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY 
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

RAJYA SABHA 
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 328 
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

STEPS TO ADDRESS FALL IN EXPORT OF GOODS

328. SHRI K.K. RAGESH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether Government has taken any concrete steps to address the fall in India's export of goods, which has fallen for a tenth straight month in October; and

b) whether Government has noticed any significant adverse impact of the fall in export on employment?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(INDEPENDENT CHARGE) 
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

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(a) The steps taken by Government to address the fall in exports are:

(i) New Foreign Trade Policy (2015-20) launched on 1st April, 2015 with a focus on supporting both manufacturing and services exports and improving the ‘Ease of Doing Business’. The policy has introduced two new schemes, namely, ‘Merchandise Exports from India Scheme’ (MEIS) for incentivising export of specified goods to specified markets and ‘Service Exports from India Scheme’ (SEIS) for increasing exports of notified services from India, by consolidating earlier schemes.

(ii) By way of trade facilitation and enhancing the ease of doing business, Government reduced the number of mandatory documents required for exports and imports to three each, which is comparable with international benchmarks. The trade community can file applications online for various trade related schemes. Online payment of application fees through Credit/Debit Cards and electronic fund transfer from 53 Banks has been put in place.

(iii) The Government has also expanded the coverage of Merchandise Exports from India scheme on 29th October, 2015 by adding 110 new items to the original 4914 lines included in the scheme. The reward rates/country coverage of 2228 items were enhanced. Consequently the envisaged revenue outgo under the
scheme was increased from Rs. 18,000/- crore earlier to Rs. 21,000/- crore per annum.

(iv) Government has infused additional Corpus (Capital) to the tune of Rs. 375/- crore into the National Export Insurance Account (NEIA), raising the corpus to over Rs. 2,100/- crore, and strengthen the capacity to augment Project exports from the country. The equity capital of ECGC Ltd. has also been raised by Rs. 50 crore to Rs. 1,300 crore, enabling higher underwriting capacity to support exporters to expand their business and support banks for adequate lending to exporters.

(v) Recently, the government has approved the proposal for implementing the Interest Equalization Scheme on Pre & Post shipment Rupee Export Credit w.e.f. 1st April, 2015 for 5 years, incorporating an interest equalization element of 3% per annum. This scheme will facilitate access to export credit at competitive rate of interest, given the lower interest rate level prevailing for exporters in other countries.

(vi) The State governments have been requested to develop their export strategy, appoint export commissioners, address infrastructure constraints restricting movement of goods, facilitate refund of VAT/Octroi/State level cess, and address other issues relating to various clearances etc. and build capacity of new exporters, in order to promote exports.

(b) According to Ministry of Labour & Employment Quarterly Survey, in comparison to Dec 2013 the employment in 2014 has increased by 196000 in exporting units.

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 329
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

SENDING MAIDEN TEA DELEGATION TO GEORGIA

329. SHRI A.K. SELVARAJ:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to send a maiden tea delegation to Georgia;
b) whether it is also a fact that Government is aiming to capture a market share in countries where per capita consumption of tea is quite high such as Turkey; and
c) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

*****

(a): In the current financial year, there is no proposal to send a delegation of tea industry representatives to Georgia.

(b) & (c): The Government of India, through the Tea Board, takes several measures to promote export of tea to various destinations including Turkey. Such measures include inter alia, lending promotional support to Indian Tea exporters in foreign markets, exchange of tea delegations between India and Tea importing countries, buyer seller meets, Media publicity, participation in International and specialized fairs and exhibitions etc.

Government extends incentives for export of Indian teas in packaged or value added form at the rate of 5% of Free on Board (FOB) value. Tea in bulk form including tea waste and other black tea is eligible for reward at the rate of 3% of FOB value.

Tea Board also provides financial assistance to exporters of tea to subsidize partially the cost of transport from Inland Container Depot (ICD), Amingaon in Assam as well as air travel and exhibition cost for participation in exhibitions and buyer seller meets.

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 330
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

REPRESENTATION OF SMALL TEA GROWERS
BY AN INTERNATIONAL AGENCY

330. SHRI A.K. SELVARAJ:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether it is a fact that the small tea growers have made a proposal to have an international agency to help represent them;
b) if so, the details thereof; and
c) whether it is also a fact that efforts are on to find ways to directly market small tea growers’ produce and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND
INDUSTRY(INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

*****

(a) & (b): No such proposal has been received from the small tea growers. However such proposal was discussed in the Inter sessional meeting of the FAO- IGG (Food and Agricultural organisation Intergovernmental Group (IGG) on Tea held at Milan, Italy on the 15th and 16th October, 2015. The Working Group on Small holders decided on formation of an organised International set up viz Confederation of International Tea Small holders (CITS) to strengthen the small grower sector.

(c): Most of the small tea growers sell their green leaves directly to the bought leaf factories. The small growers are encouraged to become members of collective units such as Self Help Groups/Producer societies and set up their own tea factories either individually or collectively. As per the Tea (Marketing) Control Order amended in 2015, every registered tea manufacturer is required to sell not less than fifty percent of the total tea manufactured in a calendar year through public tea auctions through authorised auction centers in India. Further, the small tea growers can market their tea directly for export provided they have valid exporter license issued by Tea Board under the Tea (Distribution & Export) Control Order, 2005.

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 331
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

PROMOTION OF ORGANIC TEA IN NER

331(H). DR. SANJAY SINH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether Government is contemplating to give priority to development and promotion of organic plantation of tea in North East Region particularly in the State of Assam;

b) if so, the details thereof and progress made in this regard till now; and

c) the steps taken for encouraging organic plantation of tea in North-East Region during the last three years and the current year?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

*****

(a) to (c): Government of India implements, through the Tea Board of India, several programs for development and promotion of organic plantation of tea, throughout the country including the North East Region (NER). Such programs and incentives, inter alia, include the following:

(i) Capital subsidy is provided on the investment made for new planting/replanting or conversion from conventional to organic cultivation. The subsidy for organic cultivation is 25% more than the subsidy applicable for conventional extension/replanting/replacement planting.

(ii) Subsidy for organic tea Certification is provided at the rate of 50% of the certification fee subject to a ceiling of Rs. 1.00 lakh per certificate including renewals per annum.

(iii) In case of Self Help Groups (SHGs)/Cooperative of SHGs setting up organic tea factory, 75% of the cost of organic certifications is paid subject to ceiling of Rs. 1.5 Lakh per certification including renewal per annum. For organic tea production, the applicant factory gets additional 25% subsidy on differential cost of production (COP), compared with the conventional COP during the year of application.

(iv) Steps are taken for encouraging, creating awareness and capacity building amongst the small tea growers for organic tea cultivation.

(v) In Sikkim, several steps have been taken for promoting organic Tea such as creation of logo for Sikkim organic and promotion of Sikkim organic tea in both domestic and international market.
An Organic Tea Development Project has been implemented with support of Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) in Assam, South India and Darjeeling.
333. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether it is a fact that export of leather and leather products posted a fall for the sixth consecutive month in the current fiscal;

b) whether exports of leather and leather products have declined from April to September, 2015 as compared to the corresponding period last year;

c) whether the Central Government has not done much to revive the leather sector;

d) whether the Council of Leather Exports has requested to come out with favourable tariff so as to revive this sector; and

e) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

*****

(a) The month-wise Export of Leather and Leather Products for the current Fiscal is as follows:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015(P)</th>
<th>Value in Million USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>460.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>525.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>565.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>557.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>527.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>473.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source : DGCI&S)

(b) Yes Sir. During April to September 2015, the export of leather and leather products was US$ 3109.30 million against US$ 3437.18 million in the corresponding period of 2014.

(c) – (e) :The Government has approved 3% interest equalization scheme for all
MSME units in leather sector and for 7 tariff lines at HS 4 digit level for leather goods and footwear for 5 years w.e.f. 1.4.2015. Indian Leather Development Programme (ILDP) is being implemented for overall development of leather sector in the country by augmenting raw material base, capacity enhancement, modernization and up-gradation of leather units, establishment of institutional facilities and support to artisans. The Council for Leather Exports had requested for reduction in the rate of Central excise duty on footwear with leather upper from 12% to 6% which has already been accepted by the Government.
The Central Govt. has taken steps to address the downturn in exports. Some of the specific steps taken are as follows:

Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) scheme has been extended for finished leather (2%) and footwear components (3%) for Group A countries (including Europe and USA) w.e.f. Oct. 29, 2015. Earlier benefit was only for Group B countries (China, Hong Kong etc.).

Finished Leather Inspection System has been extended to ICD Nagpur and ICD Jalandhar vide DGFT Public Notice No. 43 (RE-2013) / 2009-14 dated Oct. 28, 2015 (apart from Chennai, Kolkata and Mumbai sea ports and ICD Tughlakabad and ICD Kanpur).

Duty drawback rates and cap values increased for products like hand bags, industrial gloves, fashion gloves, travel goods, saddlery items etc., w.e.f. 23.11.2015.

(d) & (e): The Council for Leather Exports has submitted following its pre-budget proposals for consideration in Union Budget 2016-17:

i. Exemption of Import Duty and Central Excise Duty for Machinery used in leather & footwear industry falling under HS Code 8453.

ii. Request for reduction of Basic Customs Duty on EVA from 7.5% to 5%.

iii. To enhance the duty free limit of import from 3% to 5% under Duty Free Import Scheme (DFIS), to change the description of existing entries under the scheme, to include new inputs and to make some policy amendments.

iv. Implementation of Interest Subvention Scheme for entire leather sector.

v. To Reduce the Central Excise duty for all other footwear falling under 6401, 6402, 6404 and 6405 (including non-leather footwear) with MRP over Rs.1000/- under Chapter 64 from 12.5% to 6% on par with leather footwear. To enhance the abatement of footwear from 25% to 35%.

vi. Central Excise exemption for sale of Safety Footwear to institutions and Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).

Besides, the Council for Leather Exports has also requested for the following support measures under Make in India:

- Provide 6% Scrip under Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) of Foreign Trade Policy 2015-20 as against existing 3% to Promote high value leather garments, ladies & children footwear to make India a world leader
- Provide branding support for Indian manufacturers.
- Establish a Technology Mission to ensure: - Systemic & larger collection of hides and skins, Fuller Utilization of tanner capacity to augment finished leather and Develop Framework for quality benchmarking and certification to enable creation of Indian Brands
- Upgrade and expand Capacities with latest technologies in all CETPs
- Provide assistance under Market Access Initiative Scheme (MAIS) for organising the First Designers Fair in Chennai (Feb. 1-3, 2016) so as to create a platform for Long term agreement with foreign designers to create new designs for new market.

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 334
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

TOBACCO EXPORTS

334. SHRI C.M. RAMESH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) the year-wise, country-wise and variety-wise details of different varieties of tobacco exports from India in the last ten years;
b) the country-wise foreign exchange earned through tobacco exports during the above period;
c) what efforts Ministry is making to explore new markets for Indian tobacco, particularly Flue Cured Virginia tobacco;
d) whether the Ministry requested the Ministry of External Affairs to instruct Embassies abroad to explore opportunities to export tobacco to those countries; and
e) if so, when that request was made and what is the outcome of the same?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

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(a) & (b) The information is furnished at Annexure-I.

c) to (e) The Government explores new markets on a continuous basis for all Agri products including tobacco (particularly Flue Cured Virginia (FCV)). In this connection, the Ministry of Commerce & Industry vide letter dated 02.07.2015 has taken up with the Ministry of External Affairs requesting them to issue necessary instructions to Indian Embassies abroad to explore opportunities to export tobacco to those countries.

Demand for tobacco is mostly from tobacco consuming nations and Indian Missions/Posts there have been at the forefront of organizing arranging meetings for Indian tobacco delegations with the foreign importers and organizing buyer-seller meets.

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TOBACCO MANUFACTURED</th>
<th>TOBACCO UNMANUFACTURED</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>399657881</td>
<td>1445224085</td>
<td>1844881966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>566598377</td>
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<td>2007-08</td>
<td>756991454</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2015-16(Apr-Sep)</td>
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</table>

Source: DGCI&S

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<td><strong>916064614</strong></td>
<td><strong>875304227</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: DGCI&S
335. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether at a time when India’s agriculture exports to the United States are already on a downslide, the proposed US legislation that would require agri-imports to be mandatorily inspected by the USFDA officials, would raise costs for Indian exporters steeply;

b) whether India would prevail upon the US to allow certification and inspection by local bodies like Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) for consignments of goods from India; and

c) whether agri-exporters from India are already following globally recognized systems such as GMP and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) that makes USFDA audit/inspection obviate?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

*****

(a & b) US Food Safety Modernization Act has come into force with effect from 4th January 2011 and is in the process of implementation. Various Rules/Regulations/Guidelines proposed under the Act, the dates for implementation of which vary from 2016 – 2018, are in public domain and USFDA has also invited suggestions/objections of the various stakeholders from all over the world on the above proposed Acts. The Department of Commerce has already advised Export Inspection Council (EIC), Food Safety & Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and Agricultural & Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) etc. to put their concerns in this regard before the USFDA. The Department of Commerce has also raised this issue before the US side on the Trade Policy Forum meeting which was held in Washington D. C in October, 2015 and also plans to cover these as part of the new technical dialogue on food safety proposed in TPF 2015 Joint Statement.

(c) Exporting establishments approved by Export Inspection Council (EIC)/Export Inspection Agencies are following GMP and HACCP.

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 336
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

NEW POLICY FOR TOBACCO PRODUCTS FOR SEZs

336. SHRI DHIRAJ PRASAD SAHU:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether Government proposes to have a new policy for tobacco products and pan masala for Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and if so, the details thereof;
b) whether Government has held discussions with the Development Commissioners of the zones in this regard, if so, the details and the outcome thereof;
c) whether Government is actively considering to review the SEZ policy in this regard; and
d) if so, the details and the present status thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

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(a) to (d): No Sir, no decision for review of policy for tobacco products and pan masala for Special Economic Zones (SEZs) has been taken. However, the Government, on the basis of inputs/suggestions received from stakeholders on the policy and operational framework of the SEZ Scheme, periodically reviews the policy and operational framework of SEZs and takes necessary measures so as to facilitate speedy and effective implementation of SEZs. In this backdrop discussion were held with Development Commissioners of the Zones in a routine manner. No decision has been taken to review the SEZ policy in this regard.

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 338
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

SEPARATE BOARDS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF
TURMERIC, TAMARIND, MANGO AND
BANANA/PLANTAIN

338. DR. V. MAITREYAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether Government has envisaged the need for constituting separate Boards for development of turmeric, tamarind, mango, and banana/plantain trade in the country;

b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

c) the steps taken by Government to provide all kinds of support for the trade of turmeric, tamarind, mango and banana/plantain; and

d) the total revenue generated through the trade of turmeric, tamarind, mango and Banana/plantain through both domestic trade and export in the last three years?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

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(a) & (b): Presently, there is no proposal for establishing separate Boards for development of turmeric, tamarind, mango and banana/plantain trade in the country, as several departments/organizations are already working on various aspects relating to development, research, export and market promotion of these crops. Constitution of separate Boards may result in multiplication of agencies and programmes.
(c) & (d): Government implements various schemes/programmes for promoting trade of these crops and provides financial assistance for development, research, programmes such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM)/Integrated Nutrient Management (INM), organic farming, creation of water resources, micro irrigation, post harvest management, infrastructure development, value addition, quality improvement & branding and also trade promotion including participation in domestic/international fairs. Information regarding total revenue generated through the trade of turmeric, tamarind, mango and Banana/plantain etc is not centrally maintained. Export figures of these crops for the last three years is at Annexure 1.

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**Annexure 1**

Statement showing export of turmeric, tamarind, mango and banana/plantain during last three years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Turmeric</th>
<th>Tamarind</th>
<th>Mangoes, Fresh/Dried</th>
<th>Banana including Plantain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>554.88</td>
<td>107.53</td>
<td>264.72</td>
<td>130.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>666.76</td>
<td>94.40</td>
<td>285.43</td>
<td>155.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>744.35</td>
<td>89.19</td>
<td>302.54</td>
<td>244.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
340. SHRI PRAMOD TIWARI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether Indian exports have gone down in the last one year;
b) if so, the details thereof including the cumulative exports during the first half of year 2014-15 and 2015-16, respectively; and
c) the steps proposed to boost exports?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

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(a)&(b) Data on Indian Exports during the last complete financial year 2014-15 and 2015-16 (Apr-Oct) in comparison to same period of the previous year is given in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US $ Billion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>314.4</td>
<td>310.3</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>187.3</td>
<td>154.8</td>
<td>-17.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DGCI&S

(c) The Government has taken following steps to boost exports:

(vii) New Foreign Trade Policy (2015-20) launched on 1st April, 2015 with a focus on supporting both manufacturing and services exports and improving the ‘Ease of Doing Business’. The policy has introduced two new schemes, namely, ‘Merchandise Exports from India Scheme’ (MEIS) for incentivising export of specified goods to specified markets and ‘Service Exports from India Scheme’ (SEIS) for increasing exports of notified services from India, by consolidating earlier schemes.

(viii) By way of trade facilitation and enhancing the ease of doing business, Government reduced the number of mandatory documents required for exports and imports to three each, which is comparable with international benchmarks. The trade community can file applications online for various trade related schemes. Online payment of application fees through Credit/Debit Cards and electronic fund transfer from 53 Banks has been put in place.
(ix) The Government has also expanded the coverage of Merchandise Exports from India scheme on 29th October, 2015 by adding 110 new items to the original 4914 lines included in the scheme. The reward rates/country coverage of 2228 items were enhanced. Consequently the envisaged revenue outgo under the scheme was increased from Rs. 18,000/- crore earlier to Rs. 21,000/- crore per annum.

(x) Government has infused additional Corpus (Capital) to the tune of Rs. 375/- crore into the National Export Insurance Account (NEIA), raising the corpus to over Rs. 2,100/- crore, and strengthen the capacity to augment Project exports from the country. The equity capital of ECGC Ltd. has also been raised by Rs. 50 crore to Rs. 1,300 crore, enabling higher underwriting capacity to support exporters to expand their business and support banks for adequate lending to exporters.

(xi) Recently, the government has approved the proposal for implementing the Interest Equalization Scheme on Pre & Post shipment Rupee Export Credit w.e.f. 1st April, 2015 for 5 years, incorporating an interest equalization element of 3% per annum. This scheme will facilitated access export credit at competitive rate of interest, given the lower interest rate level prevailing for exporters in other countries.

(xii) The State governments have been requested to develop their export strategy, appoint export commissioners, address infrastructure constraints restricting movement of goods, facilitate refund of VAT/Octroi/State level cess, and address other issues relating to various clearances etc. and build capacity of new exporters, in order to promote exports.
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 344
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

DISTRESS DUE TO FALL IN PRICES OF PLANTATION CROPS

344. SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCe AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether Government is aware that lakhs of people cultivating commercial crops such as rubber, coconut, sugarcane cotton, etc., are in great distress due to steep fall in price of their crops;
b) whether Government is aware that most farmers' suicides are by such farmers;
c) whether Government is aware that their distress is mainly due to Government allowing corporates to import such products at lesser prices from international markets; and
d) since no corporate is prepared to sell their products at lesser prices and pass on part of their profit to consumers, whether Government would insist that they purchase raw materials only from internal market?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCe AND INDUSTRY(INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

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(a) Government is aware of the recent decline in the prices of commodities and their impact on farmers. Natural Rubber (NR) prices have fallen mainly due to fall in rubber prices in the international markets and the lower demand for the type of NR produced domestically. The price of Coconut has fallen relatively from a high achieved during August, 2014 on account of fall in demand and price of coconut oil. There is no distress sale reported in raw cotton (Kapas) as kapas prices are ruling above the Minimum Support Price (MSP). As regards sugarcane prices, the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for sugarcane has been increased in 2014-15 over 2013-14.

(b) As per report of National Crime Reports Bureau-2014, suicides by farmers due to ‘Failure of Crop’ is around 16.8%.

(c) & (d): Import of agriculture commodities takes place as per the provisions of approved Foreign Trade Policy of the Government. Quantitative Restrictions on import and export have been dismantled as part of
open trade policy followed by India as a member of WTO. However, restrictions on imports are imposed for protecting human, animal and plant life or health; protection of environment; national security and public moral and intellectual property. The Government takes resort to trade defence measures like anti-dumping duty and counter-vailing duty in order to counter unfair trade practices on the basis of petitions from members of trade/industry.
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 345
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

RECONSTITUTION OF TEA BOARD

345. SHRI PAUL MANOJ PANDIAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to reconstitute the Tea Board of India after a considerable gap of 19 months, if so, the details thereof;

b) whether it is also a fact that the proposed new Board will constitute members drawn from Parliamentarians, tea producers, traders, brokers, consumers and representatives of Government from the principal tea producing States and trade unions; and

c) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

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(a) to (d) The tenure of the last Tea Board expired on 31.03.2014. The Government has reconstituted the Tea Board vide Gazette Notification No. S.O 2989(E) dated 02.11.2015 for a period of three years upto 01.11.2018. Notification is Annexed.

The Tea Board members are nominated as per the composition of the Board defined in the under Tea Act, 1953 and the rules made thereunder. The members are drawn from Parliamentarians, tea producers, traders, consumers and representatives of Government from the principal tea producing States and trade unions.

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RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 347
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

TRADE DEFICIT

347. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether it is a fact that India is experiencing huge trade deficit year after year;
b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
c) the details of steps taken by the Central Government to boost country's exports?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND
INDUSTRY(INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

*****

(a & b) The data on the trade deficit since Financial Year 2012-13 is shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trade deficit</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>190.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>135.8</td>
<td>(April-October) (Prov.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>137.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DGCI&S

The merchandise trade deficit relates in large measure to the country’s dependence on import of petroleum. In the recent period prices of petroleum have come down and as a result the merchandise trade deficit has also come down. The gap is bridged by a positive net export of services and net capital inflows.

(c) The details of steps taken by the Central Government to boost country’s exports are:

(xiii) New Foreign Trade Policy (2015-20) launched on 1st April, 2015 with a focus on supporting both manufacturing and services exports and improving the ‘Ease of Doing Business’. The policy has
introduced two new schemes, namely, ‘Merchandise Exports from India Scheme’ (MEIS) for incentivising export of specified goods to specified markets and ‘Service Exports from India Scheme’ (SEIS) for increasing exports of notified services from India, by consolidating earlier schemes.

(xiv) By way of trade facilitation and enhancing the ease of doing business, Government reduced the number of mandatory documents required for exports and imports to three each, which is comparable with international benchmarks. The trade community can file applications online for various trade related schemes. Online payment of application fees through Credit/Debit Cards and electronic fund transfer from 53 Banks has been put in place.

(xv) The Government has also expanded the coverage of Merchandise Exports from India scheme on 29th October, 2015 by adding 110 new items to the original 4914 lines included in the scheme. The reward rates/country coverage of 2228 items were enhanced. Consequently the envisaged revenue outgo under the scheme was increased from Rs. 18,000/- crore earlier to Rs. 21,000/- crore per annum.

(xvi) Government has infused additional Corpus (Capital) to the tune of Rs. 375/- crore into the National Export Insurance Account (NEIA), raising the corpus to over Rs. 2,100/- crore, and strengthen the capacity to augment Project exports from the country. The equity capital of ECGC Ltd. has also been raised by Rs. 50 crore to Rs. 1,300 crore, enabling higher underwriting capacity to support exporters to expand their business and support banks for adequate lending to exporters.

(xvii) Recently, the government has approved the proposal for implementing the Interest Equalization Scheme on Pre & Post shipment Rupee Export Credit w.e.f. 1st April, 2015 for 5 years, incorporating an interest equalization element of 3% per annum. This scheme will facilitated access export credit at competitive rate of interest, given the lower interest rate level prevailing for exporters in other countries.

(xviii) The State governments have been requested to develop their export strategy, appoint export commissioners, address infrastructure constraints restricting movement of goods, facilitate refund of VAT/Octroi/State level cess, and address other issues relating to various clearances etc. and build capacity of new exporters, in order to promote exports.

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RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 348
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2015

STEPS TO CHECK SHRINKING OF EXPORTS

348. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether exports have fallen considerably in the first and second quarter of the current financial year;
b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for the same; and
c) the measures Government has taken to check shrinking of exports during the current year?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

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(a & b) Exports in the first and second quarter of the current financial year as compared to the corresponding period in the earlier year are given in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>2014-15 (Provisional)</th>
<th>2015-16 (Provisional)</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April-June</td>
<td>79.93</td>
<td>66.91</td>
<td>-16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July-Sept</td>
<td>81.47</td>
<td>66.45</td>
<td>-18.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DGCI&S

The probable reasons for fall in exports include:
(i) The global slowdown during 2014 and 2015 which has impacted Global Trade and India’s Trade adversely. (ii) Moderate but uncertain recovery in the US Economy. (iii) The slowdown in the Chinese Economy. (iv) Sharp fall in Crude and Petroleum product prices, (Brent crude declining from about USD 98 per barrel last year to USD 47.57 at present). (v) fall in other commodity prices (Gold prices fell by 7.2% high grade copper by about 26% in last one year (vi) Currency Fluctuations

(c) The measures Government has taken to check shrinking of exports during the current year

(xix) New Foreign Trade Policy (2015-20) launched on 1st April, 2015 with a focus on supporting both manufacturing and services exports and improving the ‘Ease of Doing Business’. The policy has
introduced two new schemes, namely, ‘Merchandise Exports from India Scheme’ (MEIS) for incentivising export of specified goods to specified markets and ‘Service Exports from India Scheme’ (SEIS) for increasing exports of notified services from India, by consolidating earlier schemes.

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(xxiv) The State governments have been requested to develop their export strategy, appoint export commissioners, address infrastructure constraints restricting movement of goods, facilitate refund of VAT/Octroi/State level cess, and address other issues relating to various clearances etc. and build capacity of new exporters, in order to promote exports.

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