Framing of Policy for Organic Products

*262. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

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

(a) whether Government proposes to frame a policy with regard to organic products with specific safety standards, traceability norms, soil certification guidelines, etc.;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) what are the agencies in India at present that certify organic products for export and for domestic market; and
(d) what was the quantum of export of certified organic products from India, in the last year and whether uniform norms for certification would boost farm exports, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

****

a) to d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.
(a & b): The Ministry of Commerce & Industry has notified the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) under the Foreign Trade (Development & Regulations) Act, 1992 to facilitate export of organic products.

Currently there are no mandatory domestic standards for organic production. However, the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has formulated the Organic Agricultural Produce Grading and Marking Rules, 2009 under the Agricultural Produce (Grading & Marking) Act, 1937. The standards prescribed under these Rules are based on NPOP and are voluntary in nature.

The Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare operates "Participatory Guarantee System-India (PGS-India)" through National Centre of Organic Farming (NCOF), Ghaziabad. The PGS-INDIA organic certification is free of cost to the farmers, which is being promoted under Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana Scheme under components of National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture.

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, has formulated following standards for organic products:

(i) IS 16550 (Part 1): 2016 Organic Production System and Labelling of Organically Produced Products Part 1 Crop Based  
(ii) IS 16550 (Part 2): 2016 Organic Production System and Labelling of Organically Produced Products Part 2 Animal Based (finalized and under publication)

Section 22 of the Food Safety & Standards Act, 2006, which is administered by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, has the provision to regulate manufacture, distribution, sale and import of organic foods, which have been defined as food products that have been produced in accordance with the specified organic production standards. The Food Safety & Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is in the process of framing regulations for manufacture, distribution, sale and import of organic foods in consultation with the concerned Ministries/Departments and organisations.

(c): The list of 25 certification bodies, accredited under NPOP for certification of organic products for exports, is at Annexure-I.

PGS-India, instead of relying on third party certification, operates by networking the local groups under common umbrella through various facilitating agencies, Regional Councils and Zonal Councils.

(d): The total volume of exports of organic products under NPOP during 2015-16 was 2.64 lakh MT valued at USD 298 million.

Uniform norms, both for export of organic products and domestic markets, will facilitate equivalence arrangements with various importing countries such as Korea, Taiwan, Canada and Japan, which would help increase export of organic products.

******
Annexure-I

The list of 25 certification bodies, accredited under NPOP for certification of organic products for exports:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Name of the Certification Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bureau Veritas Certification India (BVCI) Pvt. Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ECOCERT India Pvt. Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>IMO Control Pvt. Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Indian Organic Certification Agency (INDOCERT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lacon Quality Certification Pvt. Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>OneCert Asia Agri Certification (P) Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SGS India Pvt. Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Control Union Certifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Uttarakhand State Organic Certification Agency (USOCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>APOF Organic Certification Agency (AOCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Rajasthan Organic Certification Agency (ROCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Vedic Organic Certification Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>ISCOP (Indian Society for Certification of Organic Products)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Food Cert India Pvt. Ltd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Aditi Organic Certifications Pvt. Ltd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Chhattisgarh Certification Society, India (CGCERT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu Organic Certification Department (TNOCD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Intertek India Pvt. Ltd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh State Organic Certification Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Odisha State Organic Certification Agency (OSOCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Natural Organic Certification Agro Pvt. Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Fair Cert Certification Services Pvt. Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Gujarat Organic Products Certification Agency (GOPCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh State Organic Certification Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Karnataka State Organic Certification Agency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 266 (H)
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10th AUGUST, 2016

IMPORT OF KITE STRINGS FROM CHINA

*266. SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the kite strings being imported from China are laden with powder of Lead, Magnate, Plastic and Nylon;
(b) if so, whether the Ministry is aware about the death of people and birds taking place owing to the use of such strings for kite flying; and
(c) whether any mandatory instructions have been incorporated in the contract inked with companies involved in import of such strings and the metals used therein, so that it does not cause harm to life and property?

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.
(a) As no specific Exim Code for abrasive string used for kites (manjha) exists under Indian Trade Classification (Harmonised System), 2012, separate import data and other related information regarding abrasive string used for kites (manjha) are not available. Chinese manjha is a loose description given to kite threads made of nylon and may not necessarily be imported from China.

(b) Some petitions/grievances have been received requesting a ban on import of Chinese manjha (kite strings). There are some reports of injuries to humans, animals and birds in some parts of the country.

(c) Import data on plastic/synthetic thread shows that it is imported under four different Chapter Heads: Chapter 39, 54, 55 & 56 of Indian Trade Classification [Harmonised System] 2012. In addition, as kite flying kit (toy) containing such thread, it may find entry under Chapter 95of ITC(HS). These are also produced domestically. Placing regulations/restrictions only on imported synthetic/plastic threads alone, which may have multiple uses, without imposing similar restriction/regulation on domestic sources also would violate India’s commitments to the WTO. However, as Retail trade is a State subject, the State Governments have been requested to take appropriate action in the matter. As per the information available, some State Governments including Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra have banned procuring/distribution/sale/use of nylon thread and other synthetic non-biodegradable threads used for kite flying which are commonly called Chinese manjha.

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

(a) whether Government is contemplating to set up such special development zones in the country as they were set up in the other countries;

(b) whether Government had earlier sent any such authorised committee to visit other countries for studying and bringing such concept of zones to India for promoting industry/trade/business; 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): No Sir, there is no proposal regarding special development zones is pending at present.

*****
FUNCTIONAL SEZS

2623(H). DR. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE:

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

(a) the number of fully functional Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in the country;
(b) the State/Union Territory-wise number of all such functional Special Economic Zones along with their area separately;
(c) the future programme of Government regarding those SEZs which are not fully functional or not operational; and
(d) whether there are uniform or varied rules for SEZs in all States/Union Territories from the view of tax system?

ANSWER

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

(a) and (b): As on 31.03.2016, 204 Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are functional. State/Union Territory-wise details of number of functional SEZs along with their area is at Annex.

(c): Review of functioning of SEZs is an on-going process and on the basis of inputs/suggestions received from stakeholders on the policy and operational framework of the SEZ Scheme, Government takes necessary measures so as to facilitate speedy and effective implementation of the SEZ Scheme, including, inter-alia, review meetings with the Development Commissioners of the SEZs, open house meetings with SEZ stakeholders, Road Shows in various States to give wide publicity of SEZs, etc.

(d): The fiscal concessions and tax / duty benefits allowed to Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are in-built into the SEZs Act, 2005 and Rules thereunder which are uniformly applicable to all States/Union Territories. Act provides that State Governments may take suitable exemption from the State taxes, levies and duties.

*****
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States/UTs</th>
<th>Functional SEZs (Central Govt. + State Govt./Pvt. SEZs + notified SEZs under the SEZ Act, 2005)</th>
<th>Total Notified Area (Hectares)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6129.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandigarh</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhattisgarh</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>101.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14325.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>101.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1709.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>666.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1121.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2844.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odisha</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>419.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>460.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3620.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telangana</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1432.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>468.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>211.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRAND TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>204</strong></td>
<td><strong>33723.77</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*****
2625(H). SHRI PRABHAT JHA:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that various products being imported in India from China do not meet the international norms and they are also harmful for the consumers as well;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether there is a proposal to ban the products imported from China;
(d) if so, the details thereof;
(e) whether there is already a ban on import of several products manufactured in China; and
(f) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

*****

(a) & (b): Economies today across the globe are highly complex and interdependent. No economy can adopt a closed stance without adversely impacting its citizen in terms of meeting their needs. Imports address situations like shortage/ non-availability of items, price/quantity preference of consumers etc. Within this framework, goods are imported into the country subject to all the laws/rules regarding protection of environment, ensuring quality, standards and national security. Further, the Foreign Trade Policy (2015-20) lays down that whatever domestic Laws/ Rules/ Orders/ regulations/ Technical specifications/ environmental/ safety and health norms are applicable on domestically produced goods; the same shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to imports. India has an elaborate and robust legal framework and institutional set up to protect its environment, life and health of its people, plants and animals. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has notified the hazardous waste rules, 2008 for environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) applicable to domestic goods are also applicable to imported goods. For imported food and edible items, Food Safety and Standards Act (FSSA), 2006 and Rules there under are also applicable.
India and China are members of the WTO and therefore any restrictions imposed on trade needs to be WTO compliant. Trade remedy measures imposed on China include prohibition of import of milk and milk products (including chocolates and chocolate products and candies/ confectionary/ food preparations with milk or milk solids as an ingredient) till 24.6.2017 or until further orders, whichever is earlier. Minimum Import Price (MIP) had been imposed on 173 Exim Codes of Chapter 72 on imports of Iron and Steel since 5th February, 2016, which has now been extended beyond 04th August 2016 on 66 Exim Codes of Chapter 72.
INCENTIVES FOR IMPORT OF PULSES

2627. SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL:
   SHRI P. BHATTACHARYA:
   SHRI DARSHAN SINGH YADAV:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the import of pulses is being encouraged to increase their availability in the country;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) the reasons for non-availability of those economic incentives to private sector agencies which are available to Government agencies for the import of pulses; and
(d) the reasons for not seeking cooperation of private sector in increasing the availability of pulses in the country?

ANSWER

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

*****

(a) & (b): There is growing demand for pulses in India and the domestic production is unable to satisfy demand. The gap between demand and supply of pulses in our country is, therefore, met through imports of pulses.

(c) & (d): The Government has allowed imports of pulses at zero import duty to facilitate imports by all entities including private sector. There are no specific economic incentives available to Government agencies for import of pulses.

*****
IMPOSITION/LIFTING OF BAN ON EXPORT/IMPORT OF COMMODITIES

2628(H). SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP:

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

(a) the commodities on which export and import ban have been imposed or lifted in the country in the last one year, the reasons therefor;
(b) the steps being taken by Government to bring balance in the trade with several neighbouring countries, especially with China;
(c) the steps being taken by Government to check the entry of poor quality products of China in abundance in Indian markets; and
(d) the success achieved in bringing trade balance with it?

ANSWER

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

*****

(a): As on date, barring restrictions on import of milk and milk products from China till 23.6.2017 or until further orders, no ban on export / import of any other item has been imposed or lifted during the last one year.

(b): Efforts are continuously made to increase overall exports by diversifying the trade basket with emphasis on manufactured goods, services, resolution of market access issues and other non-tariff barriers. This is done through bilateral meetings and institutional dialogues. Indian exporters are encouraged to participate in major trade fairs in China and other countries to show-case Indian products.

(c): Economies today across the globe are highly complex and interdependent. No economy can adopt a closed stance without adversely impacting its citizen in terms of meeting their needs. Imports address situations like shortage/non-availability of items, price/quantity preference of consumers etc. Within this framework, goods are imported into the country subject to all the laws/rules regarding protection of environment, ensuring quality, standard and national security.
Further, the Foreign Trade Policy (2015-2020) lays down that whatever Domestic Laws/ Rules/ Orders/ regulations / Technical specifications/ environmental/ safety and health norms are applicable on domestically produced goods; the same shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to imports. India has an elaborate and robust legal framework and institutional set up to protect its environment, life and health of its people, plants and animals. The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has notified the Hazardous Waste Rules 2008 for environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) applicable to domestic goods are also applicable to imported goods. For imported food and edible items, Food Safety and Standards Act (FSSA), 2006 and Rules frame there under are also applicable.

India and China are members of the WTO and therefore any restrictions imposed on trade needs to be WTO complaint. Trade remedy measures imposed on China include prohibition of import of milk and milk products till 23.6.2017 or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

(d): Details of the merchandise imports, exports and the trade deficit with China during the last three years are given below:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Import</th>
<th>Export</th>
<th>Total Trade</th>
<th>Trade Deficit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>51.03</td>
<td>14.82</td>
<td>65.85</td>
<td>36.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>60.41</td>
<td>11.93</td>
<td>72.34</td>
<td>48.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>61.70</td>
<td>9.02</td>
<td>70.73</td>
<td>52.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: DGCI&S)
FTAS WITH ISRAEL, AUSTRIA, EURASIAN AND GULF COUNTRIES

2630. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T.:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry is discussing Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with Israel, Austria, Eurasian and Gulf countries;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) what is the existing trade status with each of the above countries; and
(d) how India looks at Brexit and if Britain exits from the European Union (EU), what opportunities India will have in Britain?

ANSWER

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

*****

(a) to (c): The Department of Commerce is negotiating a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Israel. The eighth round was held in Israel from 24-26 November, 2013 wherein discussions took place on market access in goods, rules of origin, custom procedures and trade in services. In the subsequent inter-sessional consultations, the focus has been on a balanced outcome in both goods and services. Although India is negotiating the India-European Union Broad-based Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (India-EU BTIA) which includes Austria, there are no bilateral negotiations. The EU BTIA negotiations began in 2007 with sixteen rounds of negotiations concluded. Moreover, three rounds of stocktaking meetings have been held recently on 18th January, 2016, 22nd February, 2016 and 15th July, 2016. A Joint Study Group (JSG) has been set up for considering the feasibility of entering into an FTA between India and Eurasian Economic Union (EaEU) comprising of 5 countries namely Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan. The first meeting of the JSG with EaEU was held on 31st July, 2015. A Free Trade Agreement is also being negotiated with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) which comprises Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. The second round of negotiations was
held on 9-10 September, 2008 in Riyadh, with the GCC now reviewing all their economic engagements. India’s bilateral trade (in US$ million) with Israel, Austria, Eurasian and Gulf countries during the last three years is as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>6058.52</td>
<td>5617.89</td>
<td>4955.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1,165.24</td>
<td>1,179.02</td>
<td>1,167.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Eurasian Countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>6,015.66</td>
<td>6,346.23</td>
<td>6,183.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>917.84</td>
<td>952.35</td>
<td>504.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii)</td>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>211.11</td>
<td>230.31</td>
<td>200.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv)</td>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>74.17</td>
<td>92.29</td>
<td>37.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v)</td>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>35.18</td>
<td>38.53</td>
<td>26.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Gulf countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>18,214.69</td>
<td>14,580.85</td>
<td>6,209.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td>United Arab Emirates(UAE)</td>
<td>59,540.24</td>
<td>59,167.99</td>
<td>49,729.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii)</td>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>48,622.60</td>
<td>39,268.98</td>
<td>26,714.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv)</td>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>5,763.45</td>
<td>4,131.69</td>
<td>3,863.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v)</td>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>1,202.60</td>
<td>919.23</td>
<td>1,011.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi)</td>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>16,677.04</td>
<td>15,659.69</td>
<td>9,925.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source DGCIS)

(d) The full impact of the decision of Great Britain to leave the European Union may take some time to unfold. The opportunities for India would depend on Great Britain’s negotiations of terms of exit with the European Union and their future negotiated trade relations.

****
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2631(H)
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10th AUGUST, 2016

FALL IN IMPORT OF GOLD

2631(H). SHRI P.L. PUNIA:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that import of gold is going down in the country since last March and import of gold has reduced by 51 per cent during April-May, 2016, the details thereof;
(b) the reasons for fall in the import of gold and the efforts being made by Government to improve this situation, the details thereof; and
(c) the extent of job loss caused by a fall in gold import, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

*****

(a) The details of import of gold during April-May 2016 are as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIOD</th>
<th>Quantity (KG)</th>
<th>Value (MILLION USD)</th>
<th>Percentage Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APR'15 TO MAY'15</td>
<td>155946</td>
<td>5552.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APR'16 TO MAY'16</td>
<td>77559</td>
<td>2711.62</td>
<td>(-)50.27 (-)51.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DGCI&S

b) Some of the major reasons for decline in import of gold are as follows:-

(i) The nationwide strike by jewellers in March and April 2016, in response to the imposition of Excise Duty on jewellery manufacturing in the Union budget 2016-17.

(ii) The increase in the price of gold since the beginning of the year 2016.

Government continues to support exports by this sector through various schemes such as Replenishment Authorisation for Gems, Advance Procurement/Replenishment of Precious metals, Replenishment Authorisation for consumables, Advance Authorisation for precious metals, Export Promotion Capital Goods Scheme etc.
Ministry of Finance has constituted a Sub-Committee of the High Level Committee to interact with Trade & Industry on the issues related to Excise Duty on jewellery.

c) As per the Quarterly Employment Survey of the Labour Bureau on changes in employment, available till December 2015, the quarterly estimated changes in employment in the Gems and Jewellery sector are as under:

Estimated change in employment during the quarterly surveys for Gems & Jewellery Sector. (Units in Lakhs):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey period</th>
<th>Change in employment (in Lakhs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June, 13 over Mar, 13</td>
<td>0.08 (-)0.06 (-)0.06 0.01 0.07 0.08 (-)0.05 (-)0.06 (-)0.03 (-)0.02 (-)0.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Labour Bureau.

****
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2632
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10th AUGUST, 2016

TRADE SANCTIONS BY THE US ON IMPORT RESTRICTIONS OF US POULTRY

2632. SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

SHRI ANIL DESAI:

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

(a) whether the US is seeking trade sanctions against India after winning a dispute at the World Trade Organisation regarding Indian restrictions on imports of US poultry, meat, eggs and live pigs;
(b) if so, the strategy being adopted by India to counter their claims; and
(c) what steps were taken by the Ministry in the last 12 months to substantiate the truth when the US won the dispute in June last year and when the WTO's Appellate Body ruled that India's restrictions were discriminatory and based on unsubstantiated fears over bird flu?

ANSWER

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

*****

(a) to (c): In the WTO dispute DS430 (India- Measures Concerning the Importation of Certain Agricultural Products), the United States sought authorization from WTO Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) for trade sanctions against India for its non-compliance of Appellate Body/Panel ruling in this Dispute. After detailed consultation with experts as well as stakeholders, GOI had issued a revised notification, which India considers as its compliance with the Ruling. Based on this, India requested the US to withdraw its request or suspend the arbitration proceedings. US still feels that India’s revised notification is short of the WTO ruling. Both India and the US are in contact with each other on this matter.

****
2637. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY:

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

(a) whether Government has plans to restructure/review the various Boards under the Ministry, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(b) whether Government has identified the problem areas and to sort them out, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

*****

(a) to (b): There are five statutory Commodity Boards viz. Tea Board, Coffee Board, Rubber Board, Spices Board and Tobacco Board under the Department of Commerce which are responsible for facilitation for production, development and export of tea, coffee, rubber, spices and tobacco. Presently, there is no proposal for restructuring of the boards. The performance of the Boards is reviewed by the Ministry on a regular basis to ensure the effective functioning of the boards and corrective action is taken wherever required.

*****
2640. SHRI ANIL DESAI:

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

(a) whether exit of Britain from EU will provide India a better market access to the European Union and England in spite of some market volatility;
(b) whether as risk aversion sets in, there would be a decline in financial markets, how India would face this impact along with other countries;
(c) whether trade strategies are being reworked out, could there be potential advantages in the form of better market access for India to the EU and Britain; and
(d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): Better market access to European Union and Britain; the need to rework trade strategies; and the potential advantages in the form of better market access for India are dependent on the terms and conditions of UK’s withdrawal arrangement from the European Union. Considering India’s sound macro-economic fundamentals, comfortable foreign exchange reserves, commitment to fiscal discipline and declining inflation, India is well placed to withstand financial volatility.

…..