

also for EOU/EPZ/EHTP/STP units would qualify for automatic route subject to above parameters.

(d) Specific reaction of Industry Federations has not been called for. However, newspaper reports indicate that the decision of the Government has been generally welcomed.

(e) FDI Policy has been liberalised to make India globally competitive as an investment destination.

ULFA's Threat to Tea Industry

1081. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether panic has gripped the Tea industry in upper Assam's Golaghat district after ULFA threats for extortion notices served on them;

(b) if so, the measures taken to ensure that garden owners do not flee resulting in low production and export; and

(c) the performance of Assam Tea estate during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) Some reports of extortion notices by militant groups on tea executives have been received. There is no panic and the situation is well under control. Besides a tea protection force, the State Police and other security forces are providing security to the area.

(c) The tea estates located in Assam have reported a production of 403.14 mn.kgs during the period April—December, 1999.

Import-Export Growth

1082. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) What are the details about the import-export growth during the last three years and till date;

(b) What are the reasons for not increasing of balance of trade; and

(c) the steps being taken or proposed to be taken by Government to improve our balance of payment?