

review of implementation of the decisions of the earlier meeting, current status of trade and economic cooperation and steps for further development, issues relating to cooperation in Transport, Banking and Financial and Agricultural sectors, etc. were discussed in the Protocol.

(c) The utilisation of the Russian rupee debt fund is governed by the Arrangement between the Bank for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and the Reserve Bank of India for implementing the provisions of the letters dated 28-29 January, 1993 and 6 September, 1993 exchanged between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of India. As per this Arrangement, the funds related to the payment of the Russian rupee debt are to be utilized for purchase of goods and services from India. The bulk of India's exports to Russian are on this account.

Import of second hand cars

311. SHRI RAMACHANDRAIAH RUMANDLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether blanket permission to import any type of second hand car is allowed;

(b) if so, whether they are likely to create pollution and dumping grounds of junks; and

(c) the steps taken to check any attempt to push a policy which permits such imports?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) Second hand/used motor cars (including jeep and land rover), are classified under Exim Code No. 87.03 of ITC(HS) Classifications of Export and Import Items. Presently imports under the Exim Code are restricted.

(c) In view of India's International commitments, the restriction on import of this item may have to be removed latest by 1st April, 2001. However, all such imports will be subject to applicable rates of customs duty as well as provisions of any other national laws for the time being in force.

Industrial units closed down in private sector

312. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of industrial units in private sector closed down during the last three years in the country; and

(b) the number of workers/employees lost their jobs during this period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) and (b) From 1997 to 1999 closure of 428 industrial units in private sector, affecting 35,130 workers has been reported.

Phasing out of quantitative restrictions on imports

313. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have entered into an agreement with the USA to phase out all quantitative restrictions on imports by April, 2001;

(b) if so, the list of those commodities at 8-digits level;

(c) what is the maximum rate of basic customs duty that Government can impose after removal of quantitative restrictions on the import of commodities in the agricultural sector, textiles, automobiles, etc.; and

(d) whether the level of duty to be levied would be decided upon by countries having a hold in the WTO?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) Consequent to the rulings and recommendations of the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on the dispute filed by the United States of America on Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) maintained by India on imports, India and the USA have signed a bilateral agreement for removal of its remaining QRs on 1429 tariff lines at eight digit level maintained on balance of payments grounds by 1st April, 2001. The list of these items has been made available to the Parliament Library.

(c) and (d) Each Member of WTO has taken commitments on several tariff lines by fixing the bound rates of tariffs, which is the maximum permissible level to which tariffs can be raised. Applied tariffs are, however, determined by the Member country depending on various considerations, within these bound levels.

It may be mentioned that out of the 1429 tariff lines on which QRs are to be removed as per bilateral Agreement with USA, 863 tariff lines are unbound and on 355 tariff lines, the bound rates are higher than the applied rates. Thus, India has considerable leverage in raising the applied rates on these tariff lines to protect its domestic industry.