

in respect of seven of these schemes have been received recently on 14.5.98. Replies in respect of three schemes have not yet been received from the State Government.

(c) Approval of the schemes under the AUWSP would depend upon the availability of funds for the same, under the Central plan, for the Ministry of Urban Affairs & Employment.

Technical clearance of other 22 schemes received from the Maharashtra Government would depend upon the techno-economic feasibility of these schemes.

बासमती चावल को पेटेन्ट करवाना

*69. श्री जनार्दन यादव :

श्री मती वीणा वर्मा :

क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि भारत पूरे विश्व में बासमती चावल का सबसे बड़ा और एकमात्र उत्पादक है;

(ख) क्या यह भी सच है कि भारतीय बासमती को अमरीकी बासमती के नाम से पेटेन्ट कराया गया है;

(ग) क्या सरकार अमरीका में पेटेन्ट कराये गये बासमती चावल के पेटेन्ट को रद्द करवाने के संबंध में कार्यवाही करने पर विचार कर रही है; और

(घ) यदि हां, तो कब तक और यदि नहीं, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं?

वाणिज्य मंत्री (श्री राम कृष्ण हेगड़े) : (क) बासमती चावल केवल भारत और पाकिस्तान में उगाया जाता है।

(ख) से (घ) पेटेंट्स और ट्रेडमार्क्स आयुक्त, संयुक्त राज्य अमरीका द्वारा राइस टेक, ईक. एल्विन टैक्सस को 2.9.1997 को "बासमती लाइन्स एण्ड ग्रेन्स" शीर्षक के अन्तर्गत पेटेन्ट प्रदान किया गया था। मैसर्स राइस टेक, ईक. को प्रदत्त पेटेन्ट को चुनौती देने के लिए औद्योगिक विकास विभाग, उद्योग मंत्रालय के अन्तर्गत एक अंतर-मंत्रालयी समिति की स्थापना की गई है। पेटेंट्स और ट्रेडमार्क्स आयुक्त, संयुक्त राज्य अमरीका द्वारा प्रदत्त पेटेन्ट के अधिनिर्णय को चुनौती देने के लिए मूल सामग्री और वैज्ञानिक आंकड़े भी संकलित किए जा रहे हैं।

संबंधित सरकारों द्वारा अपने-अपने पेटेन्ट कानूनों के अंतर्गत पेटेन्ट प्रदान किए जाते हैं। जब भी ऐसी सूचना मिलती है कि भारत के वाणिज्यिक हित के किन्हीं उत्पादों के लिए पेटेन्ट लिया जा रहा है और जो कि हमारे विचार से पेटेन्ट कराने के मानदण्ड को पूरा नहीं करता है, तब यह

जायजा लेने के लिए कदम उठाए जाते हैं कि पेटेन्ट प्रदान करने को चुनौती दी जा सकती है या नहीं। जब पर्याप्त सामग्री/इकट्टी हो जाती है, तब पुनः जांच के लिए और उस देश में पेटेन्ट को अंतिम रूप से समाप्त करने हेतु याचिका दायर करने के लिए कदम उठाए जाते हैं।

Reduction in investment limit of SSIs

*70. SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to reduce the maximum investment limit from the present Rs. three crore for the SSI units to Rs. one crore and continue the reservation of item for manufacture in the small scale sector; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) and (b) The Prime Minister announced at the Laghu Udyog Bharti function held on 29-4-1998 that the investment limit for a SSI unit would be reduced from Rs. 3 crores to Rs. 1 crores. Necessary follow up action on PM's announcement is being taken.

As regards reservation of items for manufacture in the small scale sector, Government's policy is to continue with the policy of reservation. However, the list/number of items so reserved may be reviewed from time to time in the overall interest of the economy.

Promotion of Indo-Myanmar and Indo-Bangladesh Trading

*71. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN:
Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government have taken to promote the Indo-Myanmar and Indo-Bangladesh trading possibilities and transit routes in relation to the North-East and neighbouring countries and of the transport re-connections or new facilities that might be useful and mutually advantageous to both sides; and

(b) these steps Government have taken to implement the suggestions made in high level S.P. Shukla Commission report to the Prime Minister on March 7, 1997 as regards trade and transit in relation to the North-East?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Indo-Myanmar Trade:

Under the Indo-Myanmar Border Trade Agreement signed between Government of India and Myanmar on 21.1.94, the Government have already operationalised border trade with Myanmar via Moreh in Manipur (corresponding to Tamu in Myanmar) w.e.f. 21.4.95.

The second route as envisaged in the Border Trade Agreement viz. Champhai in Mizoram corresponding to Rih in Myanmar is yet to be operationalised as the Myanmar side is yet to give a positive response. In the meantime, the Government of Mizoram has proposed to establish a border township viz. Zokhawthar near Champhai to facilitate border trade with Myanmar. This Ministry has sanctioned a sum of Rs. 2 crores for the construction of composite building the above township to facilitate arrangements relating to border trade with Myanmar.

Various steps are being taken to strengthen the infrastructural, banking and financial arrangements for facilitating border trade at Indo-Myanmar border in consultation with RBI, UBI, Ministry of Home Affairs and the State Government.

Indo-Bangladesh Trade:

For removing the infrastructure bottlenecks and facilitating the movement of goods on the Indo-Bangladesh border, the following projects have been approved under the Critical Infrastructure Balance (CIB) Scheme:-

- (i) Construction of a bridge over river Noubhashan; (ii) Strengthening of Bongaon-Jhowdanga-Panchpota road and construction of a truck terminus at Bongaon; (iii) Private Railway Siding up to the

proposed CWC's Warehouse at Petrapole. A Trans-Asian Railway Project is under consideration under the Asian Land Transport Infrastructure Development (ALTID) Project of Economic and social-commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP). ESCAP has set up an expert working group to study the connectivity of north eastern region with Myanmar and Bangladesh in the TAR Southern Corridor.

As a part of a measures aimed at evolving a strategy for promotion of exports through NE region, the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade were asked to conduct a study of Industrial Development and Export Potential of NE region and recommend measures. The report and recommendation have been received and the same are being examined in consultation with the concerned Ministries/Organisations.

(b) Follow up action on the recommendations of the High Level S.P. Shukla Commission report regarding trade and transit in relation to the North East is being taken up in consultation with other Ministries and Departments.

Airports Authority of India has planned a cargo terminal with all associated facilities as a part of the Master Plan for development of Guwahati Airport.

UTES have been asked to conduct a transport optimisation study with a view to examine international linkages and transit/transshipment arrangements between India and neighbouring countries of Bangladesh, Myanmar and Bhutan.

An Inter-Ministerial Task Force under the Ministry of Commerce has been set up to review the entire North-East border and inter-country trade issue and to report on trade opportunities and manufacturing potential for export in the North East.

Proposals have been received from State Governments of Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura to set up Export Promotion Industrial Parks (EPIPs) and are being examined. EPIPs in Assam and Meghalaya are already under implementation.

Meetings between official and trade delegations of Bangladesh and India frequently take place for exchange on issues of mutual interest.

Dumping of Float Glass by Indonesian Companies

*72. SHRI RAMJI LAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the large scale dumping of float glass into Indian