

1992 as compared to US dollar 2777 million during April-May 1991. India's imports amounted to US dollar 3612 million during April-May 1992 as compared to US dollar 2896 million during April-May 1991.

(c) According to provisional data, the principal commodities which registered a decline during April-May 1992 as compared to April-May 1991 include tea, tobacco, spices, iron ore, jute manufactures, etc. The reasons for decline include the fall in the commodity prices in the world market in respect of tea and spices, lower forecast of steel production and large inventory of iron ore in Japan in respect of iron ore, competition from synthetic substitutes in respect of jute manufactures, etc.

(d) Several changes in trade policy were introduced since July, 1991, aimed at strengthening export incentives eliminating a substantial volume of import licensing and rationalising the import tariff structure. Rupee has been made partially convertible to encourage generation of foreign exchange. These steps have been further consolidated in the new Export-Import Policy which, inter alia, aims to promote productivity, modernisation and competitiveness of Indian industry and thereby to enhance its export capabilities.

Introduction of Foreign Brand Names to boost tea exports

4193. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has advised the tea manufacture in the country to introduce foreign brand names to boost tea exports;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Indian brand names in tea is also catching up the World Market; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons for Government's suggestion to introduce foreign brand names?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHED): (a) to (c) While no specific advice regarding use of foreign brand names has been given, the possible use of foreign brand names is one of the elements of a strategy for boosting value added tea exports certain Indian brand name have become popular in some markets, however strategies will vary from market to market. It is for private exporters to decide whether foreign brand names would help them in boosting their value added exports in some of the markets where brand loyalties are already strongly established.

Action Plan to boost exports

4194. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have prepared an action plan to boost exports for the remainder of the current financial year; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the plan and the target to be achieved?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHED): (a) and (b) Since July 1991, a series of trade reforms have been initiated with the aim of boosting exports. These measures have been further consolidated in the Central Budget for 1992-93, wherein a system of partial convertibility of Rupee has been introduced. The new Export-Import Policy for 1992-97 inter alia aims to promote productivity, modernisation and competitiveness of Indian industry and thereby to enhance its export capabilities. Besides, the Government is working on formulating an action plan to boost exports in the medium and long term, based on the recommendations contained in the Report submitted to the Government in respect of the 34 Extreme Focus Product Groups. These broadly relate to (i) policy, (ii) procedures (iii) infrastructure and (iv) institutional mechanism. The export target for the

year 1992-92 has been set at Rs. 57850 crores.

Sharp Spurt in Imports

4195. SHRI S. K. T. RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a sharp spurt in imports showing a rise by 24.71 per cent at 3.66 billion U.S. Dollars, as reported in the Hindu dated the 2nd August, 1992 in the first two months i.e. April and May of the current fiscal year 1992-93 compared to the same period of 1991-92;

(b) whether this is due to the liberalisation policy;

(c) what is the trade deficit in the months of April and May in 1992-93; and

(d) what steps are being taken by Government to contain the alarmingly widening trade deficits?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHED): (a) According to the provisional estimates, India's imports during April-May 1992 amounted to US Dollar 3.61 billion as compared to US Dollar 2.90 billion during April-May 1991, thereby registering an increase of 24.71 per cent.

(b) The high growth in percentage terms during the current year 1992-93 is due to the lower base of imports during 1991-92. The imports were compressed by 19.4 per cent in US Dollar Terms during 1991-92, due to critical Balance of Payments situation. The imports are effected to meet the requirements of essential commodities for domestic consumption, to maintain higher levels of industrial production for domestic use and for exports and to upgrade industrial technology and technical know-how.

The trade deficit in April-May, 1992-93 amounted to US Dollar 945 million.

(d) Several changes in trade policy

were introduced since July 1991 aimed at strengthening export incentives, eliminating a substantial volume of import licensing and rationalising the import tariff structure. Rupee has been made partially convertible to encourage generation of foreign exchange. These have been further consolidated in the new Export-Import policy which, inter-alia, aims to promote productivity modernisation and competitiveness of Indian industry and thereby to enhance its export capabilities. The policy also seeks to promote efficient and internationally competitive import substitution and self-reliance under a deregulated framework for foreign trade.

Contracts placed by DGS & D

4196. DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

SHRI IQBAL SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be please to state:

(a) what is the total amount of contracts placed by the Department of Supply (DGS&D) for purchase of stores during the last three years;

(b) the names of the first ten parties who have been awarded the highest value of contracts in order and the respective amount against each one of them; and

(c) the number of years these ten parties have been getting the contracts?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHED): (a) During the last three years the total amount of contracts placed by the Department of Supply (DGS&D) are as under:—

1989-90	Rs. 3186.93 crores
1990-91	Rs. 3222.90 crores
1991-92	Rs. 3160.91 crores (Prov.)

(b) The names of the first ten parties who have been awarded the highest value of contracts in order during the year and within three years are given in the statements 1, 2, 3 and 4 enclosed (See below)