

**Import of items**

† 2291. PROF. MM AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the year-wise quantum of items imported during the last three years together with the amount of foreign exchange incurred thereon;

(b) the necessary steps taken by Government to produce these items in the country itself so far; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) There are around 10.4(H) tariff lines and the unit of measurement of quantity is not the same for all these lines. However, the quantities of various items imported during last three years are available in the publication entitled 'Monthly Statistics of Foreign Trade of India Vol-II (Imports)' brought out by Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Kolkata, copies of which are made available in the Parliament library.

The foreign exchange incurred on these items during last three years is as under:

Year	Value (Rs. crore)
1998-99	178331.69
1999-2000	215528.53
2000-2001	226773.47

(P)

P=Provisional figures

(b) and (c) The quantitative restrictions on imports of various items have been removed from time to time as part of economic reforms, to meet domestic shortages and also in accordance with our international commitments. Removal of QRs over the years has not had any significant impact on the average rate of growth of imports so far. In fact, non-oil imports during April—March 2001 have

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

shown a negative growth of 3.5% as compared to last year. Efforts have also been made to provide a level playing field to domestic producers by calibrating the duty structure, which has been revised as and when considered necessary. In addition, all imports are subject to domestic laws, rules, regulations, procedures & technical standards applicable to the domestic products.

Most of our imports comprise raw materials, essential items, capital goods and petroleum crude. It is neither possible nor economically feasible to produce all our requirements within the country.

#### **Improvement of SEZs**

2292. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

SHRIRAMAMUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that FICCI study calls for immediate steps to improve SEZs performance;

(b) if so, the steps Government have taken to implement the findings of the study, and

(c) whether Government have any plan to grant exemption to the SEZs from the purview of the labour laws ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) The FICCI study briefly sets out some of the factors for success of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) while advocating a flexible labour policy for the zones. The study has suggested that power of the Labour Commissioner be delegated to the development Commissioner of SEZ to oversee the implementation of Labour laws within the zone.

(c) The Government has not finalised its views in regard to changes in Labour laws applicable to units in Special Economic Zones.

#### **Assistance to Rubber Cultivators**

2293. SHRIYVRAGHAVAN:

SHRIJ. CHJTHARANJAN:

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