

(a) whether Government is going to dilute its stand on market access for foreign farm products just opposite the stand taken by the Government during the last Doha Round of WTO trade talks;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of impact it is likely to have on Indian agriculture due to foreign food imports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The principal aim of India's negotiating strategy in the agriculture negotiations has consistently been to protect the interests of farmers particularly with regard to their food and livelihood security. No change in approach is contemplated.

(c) Does not arise.

Effect of import of palm oil

441. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has allowed the import of palm oil for domestic consumption still on high quantity which has caused serious impact on palm cultivation and allied domestic industries;

(b) if so, whether Government will consider to reduce such huge import of palm oil from other countries and will initiate *ad hoc* board for development of palm cultivation and allied small industries;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) The Government has allowed import of edible Oils because the domestic production of edible oils not sufficient to meet the country's demand. About 40% of edible oils requirement is met through imports. Palm oil is the major edible oils imported in the country, which constitutes about 80% of the total imports

(b) to (d) No, Sir. In the absence of imports, domestic availability will be seriously affected which may lead to increase in domestic prices. However, National Oilseeds and Vegetable Oil Development Board (NOVOD), Directorate of Oilseeds Development, Hyderabad, Oil Palm India Ltd. (OPIL), Kottayam (A Joint Venture of Government of India and Government of Kerala), National Research Centre for Palm Oil of Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR), etc. are already functioning to take care of the growth of the palm oil sector.

FIEO's help for increasing exports

442. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state: