

(c) whether it will be very helpful for the development of Bihar if Special Economic Zone is established there; and

(d) whether Government will consider it in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (d) in terms of the SEZ Act, 2005 a SEZ may be set up either jointly or severally by the Central Government, State Government or any person for manufacture of goods or rendering services or for both or as a free trade warehousing zone. Such proposals duly recommended by the concerned State Government are considered by the Board of Approval for SEZs. However, no such proposal from Bihar is pending with this Department.

Decline in production of dry cells in non-SSI sector

1402. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that production of dry cells in non-SSI sector declined from 2150 million in 2008-09 to 1526 million in 2009-10;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to enhance the domestic production of dry cells and reduce the import of dry cell batteries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (c) The production of dry cells in the non-SSI sector declined marginally by 4.32% from 2146.57 million numbers in 2008-09 to 2053.74 million numbers in 2009-10. The decline can be attributed to rising input costs and reduced demand due to increase in prices and change in consumer preferences to more energy efficient products. For enhancement of domestic production of dry cells, the industry is de-licensed and eligible for foreign direct investment upto 100% on the automatic route. The Government has imposed anti-dumping measures to check imports of dry cell batteries.

Promotion of tea industry in North-Eastern region

1403. SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has considered promotion of tea industry in hilly areas of the North-Eastern region on the lines of Darjeeling as the flavour of tea varies with altitude;

(b) whether it is a fact that the quality of rubber found in the district of Karbi Anglong is one of the best in the country and what is the achievement of Rubber Board in Karbi Anglong for its promotion; and