

(b) if so, what action has been taken in this regard; and

(c) by when and the details of activities that will be conducted by Cashew Development Board in Dang district?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (c) Sir, there is no such Cashew Development Board under this Ministry. However, the Department of Commerce is in receipt of letter dated 18.12.2011 (followed by similar letters dated 14.1.2011 and 24.1.2011) from Shri Parshottam Rupala, Member of Parliament addressed to the Commerce and Industry Minister requesting expansion of activities of Cashew Development Board in Dang, Gujarat. The letter dated 18.12.2010 has been replied to on 21.1.2011.

Export of rice and wheat to Bangladesh

165. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recently decided to export five lakh tonnes of rice and wheat to Bangladesh despite a ban on outward shipments of the foodgrains;

(b) if so, whether the Minister has recently held talks with his counterpart in Bangladesh at New Delhi and signed an MoU;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) to what extent would India benefit from such an MoU with Bangladesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) Yes Sir. Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) in its meeting held on 26.07.2010 decided to allow on diplomatic basis, export of 3 lakh tons of Non basmati parboiled rice and 2 lakh tons of wheat to Bangladesh from Central Pool Stocks of Food Corporation of India (FCI).

(b) Hon'ble. Minister for Food and Disaster Management Dr. Muhammed Abdur Razzaque, People's Republic of Bangladesh met Minister of State (Independent Charge), Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution on 9th February, 2011 and requested to expedite the export of above

quantity of rice. Dr. Razzaque also met Minister of Commerce and Industry on 12th February, 2011. No MOU has been signed between the two countries with regard to export of foodgrains.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (b) above.

Reduction of FDI in pharmaceutical sector

166. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that allowing 100 per cent FDI through automatic route in pharmaceutical sector is causing a lot of problems not only with regard to availability of cheap drugs but also acquisitions by foreign Multi National Companies;

(b) whether it is also a fact that many sections are demanding for reduction of FDI in pharma sector from the present 100 per cent to 40 per cent;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any consultations in this regard have been held with stakeholders and others; and

(e) if so, the outcome of such consultations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (e) As per extant Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy, 100% FDI is allowed in the automatic route in the Drugs & Pharmaceuticals sector. Concerns have been expressed that the recent takeovers of Indian Pharmaceuticals Companies by Multi National Companies would result in their gaining market supremacy affecting the prices of generic drugs. Stakeholders have made suggestions to address these concerns. The suggestions include imposing a cap of 49% and shifting FDI in the pharmaceutical sector from the automatic route to Government route. The Government has initiated Inter-Departmental consultations on how best to address this issue.

Opposition to FDI in retail sector

†167. SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.