

Inclusion of food processing industry in SSI

3353. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have considered to include food processing industry in small scale industry so that more employment is provided with less investment;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (c) All industrial undertakings, including those in the food processing industry, in which the investment in fixed assets in plant and machinery does not exceed Rs. one crore are regarded as small scale industries (SSI) units.

India-Bangladesh FTA

3354. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Bangladesh signed a bilateral Free Trade Agreement during the recent visit of Bangladesh Prime Minister;

(b) if so, the details of the agreement reached and signed;

(c) whether both the countries signed a MoU on issues of standards between designated institutions of the two countries for removal of all non-tariff barriers; and

(d) to what extent the trade between the two countries could further be improved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The total trade between India and Bangladesh for the year 2003-04 was US\$ 1818 million which got reduced to US\$ 1641 million during the

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year 2004-05. As per the data available for the year 2005-06 (April-December) the total bilateral trade has been recorded at US\$ 1205 million corresponding to bilateral trade of US\$ 1146 million during the period 2004-05 (April—December) which shows a growth of 12%. Both the countries have signed a revised Trade Agreement during the visit Bangladesh Prime Minister in March, 2006. A meeting of Joint Working Group on Trade was held on 1st-2nd August, 2005 and both the countries also had a meeting of the Joint Working Group on Customs on 3rd-4th may, 2006 to enhance the trade between the two countries. Both Countries are also signatories to the South Asia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) and it is expected that with the coming into force of SAFTA with effect from 1.7.2006, trade between the two countries would further improve.

Export Targets

3355. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India's export target of \$ 92 billion set for the year 2005-06 wil be achieved and is expected to rise further;

(b) if so, whether India merchandise exports continued to record double-digit growth during the current financial year touching 20 per cent;

(c) whether, during the year 2004-05, India's merchandise exports at US\$ 80 billion far exceeded the export target; and

(d) whether number of measures have been taken the export promotion capital goods scheme to provide thrust on SSI sector and the retail sector to promote exports through modernization of machinery to facilitate further growth in overall exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Total exports of about US\$ 101 billion was achieved against the target of US\$92 billion fixed for 2005-06 achieving a growth rate of about 25 percent. During 2006-07, exports are expected to reach US\$ 120 billion.

(c) The total exports were US\$ 81 billion, exceeding the target fixed at US \$75 billion with a growth rate of almost 27 per cent during 2004-05.