

श्री सभापति: देखिए, वह आपने...(व्यवधान)...

प्रो. एस.पी. सिंह बघेल: सर, बहुजन समाज पार्टी की राय है कि FDI किसानों के हित में, राष्ट्रीय हित में, खुदरा व्यापारियों के हित में नहीं है, इसलिए हम इसको पूरी तरह रोल बैक करने की बात कहते हैं। आप इसे स्थगित करने की बात कर रहे हैं। इसको स्थगित करने का मतलब यह है कि सरकार की मंशा ठीक नहीं है। यह वेंटिलेटर पर है, कभी भी यह इश्यु पुनर्जीवित हो सकता है।

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are not having a discussion on this, please.

प्रो. एस.पी. सिंह बघेल: अगर आप इसको रोल बैक नहीं करते हैं, तो हम यहां से वाकआउट करते हैं।

(At this stage, some hon. Members left the Chamber.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question 201.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Secretary level talks with Pakistan to improve trade relations

*201. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Pakistan have started talks at Secretary level to improve the trade relations between the two countries recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the two countries are going to have a Preferential Trade Agreement between them; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Fifth round of Commerce Secretary level talks between India and Pakistan was held on 27-28 April, 2011, in Islamabad (Pakistan). Sixth round of talks have been held on 14-15 November, 2011 in New Delhi. During the above discussion, following points have been agreed:—

(i) Both sides have agreed to jointly work to more than double bilateral trade within three years, from current levels of 2.7 Billion US dollars per annum to about 6 Billion dollars.

- (ii) The Agreed minutes of the Sixth round of talks reflect Pakistan's position for observance of Most Favoured Nation (MFN) as follows:—

“The move to full normalization of trade relations shall be sequenced. In the first stage, Pakistan will transition from the current Positive List approach to a Negative List. The consultation process on devising this Negative List is almost complete. A small Negative List shall be finalized and ratified by February, 2012. Thereafter, all items other than those on the Negative List shall be freely exportable from India to Pakistan. In the second stage, the Negative List shall be phased out. The timing for this phasing out will be announced in February, 2012 at the time the List is notified and it is expected that the phasing out will be completed before the end of 2012.”

With the entire phasing out of the Negative List, the transition process to MFN treatment shall be complete.

- (iii) Indian side has agreed to address issues raised by Pakistan under Non Tariff Barriers for import of Cement, Textiles, Fruits and Vegetables, Processed food items and Surgical instruments.
- (iv) Both sides agreed that the present visa regime for businesspersons was a significant barrier to the rapid expansion of trade. It was noted that the Interior Ministry of Pakistan and India's Ministry of Home Affairs had reached a broad understanding to put in place reciprocal arrangements which shall substantially liberalise the visa provisions for business persons.
- (v) Both sides also reached a broad understanding to enhance trade in petroleum products and put in place infrastructure for trade in electricity.

(c) and (d) India and Pakistan are signatories to an Agreement for South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) whereby both countries are obligated to accord preferential trading arrangements over and above MFN principle. Under the Trade Liberalization Programme of the SAFTA Agreement, both countries are required to reduce peak tariff to 5% by 31.12.2012 for all tariff lines, except those in the respective 'Sensitive Lists'. During the Sixth round of talks, both sides designated the Joint Secretaries in their respective Ministries of Commerce as Chief Negotiators for working on how to improve preferential trading arrangements under SAFTA.

SHRI D. RAJA: Sir, the Minister has given a very elaborate reply. In the recent past, there have been efforts by both the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan to improve relations. I appreciate the recent measures taken by both the Governments. After all, we want India and Pakistan to have normal relations, and they must engage themselves in a meaningful dialogue to take this composite dialogue to a further higher level. Having said that, trade forms an important element in normalizing our relations with Pakistan. Now, the Minister has said that with the entire phasing out of the Negative List the transition process to the Most Favoured

Nation status shall be complete. Is there any time-frame for that? How long will the phasing out of the Negative List take? India has already given the Most Favoured Nation status to Pakistan. When will the Most Favoured Nation status be given by both the countries to each other, that is, Pakistan giving the Most Favoured Nation status to India and India giving the Most Favoured Nation status to Pakistan? India has already given the Most Favoured Nation status to Pakistan. When will Pakistan give the Most Favoured Nation to India?

MR. CHAIRMAN: A question should be a question.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Sir, it is true, as the hon. Member has said, that in recent months both India and Pakistan have taken well considered steps to move towards normalisation of trade between the two countries. The trade as such is healthy. The Commerce Secretaries of the two countries had met in Islamabad on the 27th and 28th of April. Thereafter, in the month of September — 28th September, to be precise — Pakistan's Commerce Minister, Makhdoom Muhammad Amin Fahim, had come here, and we have agreed that Pakistan will move towards a Negative List. Earlier, it was a Positive List which was not giving access to a large number of tradable goods from India. Now, the discussions have been completed on the Negative List. Negative List will be formally notified by Pakistan in February, 2012. This is being done in two stages — first, the Negative List stage, and the second stage would be that they will move towards trade normalisation to phase out the Negative List, hopefully, by the end of 2012, though no definite date has been given. In February, 2012, when they move to the Negative List, I am informing the House that Pakistan's Minister has extended an invitation and I will be leading the Indian delegation to Pakistan on that occasion.

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी: सभापति महोदय, मैं वाणिज्य मंत्री जी से आपके माध्यम से पूछना चाहूंगा कि कई समाचार-पत्रों में काफी दिनों से छप रहा है कि पाकिस्तान की आई.एस.आई. ने, यहां से जो पान निर्यात होते थे और इसी तरह की अन्य छोटी-छोटी चीजों पर, यहां से निर्यात न होने देने पर दबाव डाला और उन पर रोक लगा दी गई है। यह महत्वपूर्ण चीज़ है कि आप पाकिस्तान से इस पर चर्चा कर रहे हैं, बातचीत कर रहे हैं, यह बहुत अच्छी बात है, लेकिन क्या आपने पाकिस्तान से उन मुद्दों पर भी बात की है कि वहां पर आई.एस.आई. की जो एक पैरलल सरकार चल रही है, वह आई.एस.आई. की सरकार पाकिस्तान की सरकार पर हमारे जो तमाम व्यापारिक समझौते हैं और आयात-निर्यात की जो व्यवस्था है, उन पर अपनी शर्तों के अनुसार कर रही है और उसी के अंतर्गत पाकिस्तान में पान के आयात पर आई.एस.आई. के कहने पर रोक लगाई है, क्या माननीय मंत्री जी इसके बारे में बताएंगे?

श्री आनन्द शर्मा: सभापति जी, माननीय सदस्य ने जो कहा है, मुझे ऐसी किसी सूचना या शिकायत की जानकारी नहीं है कि पान के निर्यात पर कोई पाबंदी है। यदि ऐसी कोई जानकारी मेरे पास आती है...(व्यवधान)...

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी: निर्यात पर।

श्री आनन्द शर्मा: जहां तक इनका दूसरा प्रश्न है, मैं उस पर कोई उत्तर देने में सक्षम नहीं हूं, क्योंकि वाणिज्य मंत्री के रूप में, वाणिज्य से संबंधित जो बातें हैं, MFN List, Negative List, ट्रेड नॉर्मलाइजेशन की बात है, हमने उन पर चर्चा की है।

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नकवी: गृह मंत्री से पूछ लें, पास में बैठ हुए हैं।

MS. MABEL REBELLO: Sir, as he said, as per SAFTA Agreement, tariffs will be reduced to 5 per cent by 2012. Now, it is on Sensitive List, and I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what are the tariffs today and what are the Negative Lists that are there on Indian side and on Pakistan's side.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: I would like to inform the hon. Member that India currently maintains a Sensitive List of 868 tariff lines. Pakistan has a Sensitive List of 930 tariff lines. However, due to Pakistan's present Import Control Order, the MFN principles have not yet been operationalised even by India.

Regarding the peak tariff rates, India has a current peak tariff level of 11 per cent for SAFTA-related imports from Pakistan and Sri Lanka. This peak tariff rate is to reduce to 8 per cent in January, 2012, and further to 5 per cent from 1st January, 2013.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Now, Question No. 202.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, before that, can I just make a small comment, not a question? I would like to thank the Government for allowing the Question Hour to proceed after ten days by agreeing to make the Statement that they have made. So, thank you very much. So, we are finally having the normal course of the House.

**Strategic implication of COMRA with ISA to
explore in Indian Ocean**

*202. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether China Ocean Mineral Resources Research and Development Association (COMRA) has signed a contract with the International Seabed Authority to explore 10,000 square km. of seabed in the southwest Indian Ocean;

(b) whether the Directorate of Naval Intelligence had expressed a concern that COMRA's access could have strategic implications for India's security;

(c) whether it is a fact that India has failed to be more proactive in better utilizing mining exploration rights in the Indian Ocean, thereby giving space for other countries; and

(d) if so, response of the Ministry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU):
(a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.