

provide for regulation of agricultural produce markets. In order to promote, inter alia, direct marketing/ procurement of agricultural produce directly from farmers by bulk buyers, exporters/ processors etc., the Ministry of Agriculture, in consultation with States/Union Territories, framed a Model/ APMC Act and circulated the same to States/Union Territories, in 2003, for making necessary amendments in their existing APMC Acts. Nineteen States/Union Territories have made such amendments in their APMC Act for direct marketing.

The Government has since approved a proposal to permit FDI, up to 51% under the Government route, in multi brand retail trading, subject to specified conditions. Amending the APMC Act is not one of the conditions. However, the decision has been suspended in order to evolve a broader consensus among various stakeholders.

Farmers are expected to benefit from the reduction in post-harvest losses, likely to result from the strengthening of the backend infrastructure and direct purchases by the retailers, thereby obtaining remunerative prices for their produce.

Export of rice and wheat under OGL

3106. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is allowing exports of five million tonnes of rice and wheat under the Open General Licence (OGL); and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Government has decided to permit export of non-basmati rice by the private parties out of privately held stocks from custom EDI ports. This was notified through Notification No. 71 (RE-2010)/2009-14 dated 09.09.2011 by DGFT, Government has also made export of wheat Free through custom EDI ports. The same was notified through Notification No. 72 (RE-2010)/2009-14 dated 09.09.2011 by DGFT.

Downward growth forecast by Moodys

3107. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA:

SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK:

SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to Global ratings major Moodys it may revise the country's growth forecast for 2011-12 downward to 6.5 percent;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what concrete steps Government is taking to see that the economy turns around?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Both domestic and global factors are indicated to be responsible for moderation in the low growth forecast of the economy in 2011-12. These among other, include high inflationary tendencies, low capital formation, moderation in industrial growth and global economic uncertainty.

(c) Government has already taken some confidence building measures. The major focus areas include promotion and facilitation of industrial investment including foreign direct investment; improvement in business environment; development of industrial and other infrastructure through public private initiatives; incentivizing research and development; and development of industry related skills. Government in November, 2011 also announced a National Manufacturing Policy, which aims at making Indian industry globally competitive.

Changes in patent rules for life saving drugs

†3108. SHRI BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI:

SHRI PRABHAT JHA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that life saving drugs are not available at cheaper rates due to the changes made in Indian patent law in the year 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether Government proposes to make any changes in new patent rules;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether it is a fact that many cases regarding patent of drugs are pending in the courts; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.