

(a) whether the export prices of onion and other items were cut recently by 37 per cent to 25/tonne;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how it would be beneficial to the consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) The Minimum Export Price (MEP) of general category onion has been reduced to USD 350 per MT and for Bangalore Rose onion and Krishnapuram onion to USD 400 per MT through Notification No. 85 dated 18.11.2011. Prior to this, MEP of both categories of onion was USD 475 per MT. The reduction in MEP of general category onion is 26.32 per cent whereas for Bangalore Rose onion and Krishnapuram onion it is 15.79 per cent.

(c) Government regulates the export of onion in such a way that there is no scarcity in the country and it is available to the consumers at reasonable prices and at the same time the rate should not fall drastically in the domestic market depriving the farmers of remunerative prices.

Trade imbalance between India and China

942. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK:

SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that trade imbalance between India and China has been a cause of concern;

(b) whether India-China Strategic Economic dialogue has been held to address this concern;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what further action has been taken to reduce the imbalance?

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

(b) and (c) India-China Strategic Economic Dialogue (SED) looks beyond the bilateral issues faced by the two countries and is a forum for both sides to discuss strategic macro-economic issues

impacting both nations as a result of the changing international economic and financial landscapes to share individual best practices in handling challenging domestic economic issues and to identify specific fields/areas for enhancing cooperation, learning and experience sharing. This dialogue was chaired by Deputy Chairman Planning Commission from Indian side.

(d) With a view to reducing trade deficit, efforts are being made to diversify the trade basket with emphasis on manufactured goods. We are also pursuing market access issues to tackle non-tariff barriers in the Chinese market at different fora. At the Ministerial level, we have India-China Joint Group on Economic Relations, Trade Science and Technology (JEG) where trade related issues are taken regularly. Indian exporters are encouraged to participate in major trade fairs in China to showcase Indian products in the Chinese market and increase engagement with Chinese companies. Participation of Indian exporters in trade fairs educates the Chinese importers about niche Indian products. Business to Business relations are encouraged through schemes such as Market Access Initiative (MAI)/Market Development Assistance (MDA).

Steps taken to develop salt industries

943. SHRI PARSHOTTAM KHODABHAI RUPALA:

SHRI BHARATSINH PRABHATSINH PARMAR:

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

- (a) what actions have been taken by the Ministry to develop salt industries;
- (b) how much quantity of salt has been exported during last three years and how much target has been set up for export of salt in coming five years;
- (c) whether the Ministry proposes to implement modern scientific technology for production of salt;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) what are the new schemes implemented or in the process for welfare of salt workers and how much fund has been allocated in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) The Ministry monitors the overall development of salt industry including production, distribution, quality control, training, technology upgradation and welfare activities for salt workers through the Office of Salt Commissioner.