producers/growers, State Government, rubber consumers and user industry, Central Government and other stakeholders is functioning to examine issues related to rubber production, development, consumption and exports and make suitable recommendations .

Policy to promote export of spices

1079. SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to frame any policy on spices and its trade to promote the export of spices grown in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government also proposes to initiate further measures to help the spice traders in meeting the challenges being faced by them from various countries in export of spices; and

(d) if so, the details of steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) The Government organised National Conference of all Stakeholders including producers, exporters, representatives of spice industry and State Governments etc. on development and export of spices on 27th January, 2015 at New Delhi to discuss and chart out a road map for development and promotion of spices including export of spices. Following the Conference, a national roadmap for spices sector has been drawn up for implementation.

(c) and (d) Government, through the Spices Board, implements various programmes for promoting exports of spices with focus on value addition, quality improvement and branding. Spices Board provides financial assistance to exporters for infrastructure development, trade promotion including participation in international fairs, product development and research, spice processing in North East region, promotion of India spice brands and certification of Spice Houses. Spice Parks have been set up to provide common processing facilities to producers and exporters. Spices Board has setup six quality evaluation laboratories at Cochin, Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Guntur and Tuticorin for providing analytical services and is setting up two more at Kolkata and Kandla.

Government has recently fixed the minimum price for imported cardamom at ₹ 500/- per kg. in order to regulate quality and volume of cardamom imports. The quality of imported spices is also regularly monitored by the Spices Board. The

Spices Board chairs the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH) set up by the Codex Alimentarius Commission to set international standards for spices and help Indian exports.

Comprehensive impact assessment of IT agreement in WTO

1080. SHRI RANGASAYEE RAMAKRISHNA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Trade Organization (WTO) will be moved to subject Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) to a comprehensive impact assessment before ITA-2 is negotiated; and

(b) if so, whether non-tariff barriers will also be included in such an exercise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) The World Trade Organisation (WTO) is an international body with 161 member countries at present. ITA-2 negotiations have already started and are presently being carried out by a few select WTO member countries. India is not participating in ITA-2 negotiations in view of the recommendations of the line Ministry-Department of Electronics and Information Technology as well as the domestic manufacturing industry. As India is not a participant in the ITA-2 negotiations, it is not possible to initiate a comprehensive impact assessment of ITA-I in the WTO.

Shifting of HQ office of Controller General of Patents

1081. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to shift the prestigious Headquarter office of Controller General of Patents, Design, Trademark and Geographical Indication,from Mumbai to Delhi, which is functioning since more than 43 years;

(b) if so, the reasons for such sudden decision for shifting;

(c) whether Government had done an assessment of multiple factors before shifting of such prestigious office from Mumbai to Delhi; and

(d) if so, the major findings that dictated the decision, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) Yes. Only considering; however, no final decision has been taken as yet.