

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.

(b) The decision for shifting will be taken only after due consideration in view of administrative convenience.

(c) An assessment of multiple factor will be done before taking the final decision.

(d) No final decision has been taken as yet.

Export of basmati rice

1082. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the variety-wise details of Basmati rice exported by the country particularly from the State of Punjab during the last two years;

(b) the details of competitors to India in the international market;

(c) India's share of Basmati rice in the international market during the last two years;

(d) whether it is a fact that Indian Basmati rice is set to lose its export sharply in view of stiff competition from other countries; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) The details of export of Basmati rice during the last two years are as under:

(Quantity in Million MT, Value USD Million)

Particular	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15 (April-Feb)
Quantity	3.46	3.76	3.30
Value	3564	4866	4116

Source: APEDA

The variety-wise and state-wise details of export are not maintained.

(b) The Pakistan is the only other producer and exporter country for Basmati rice in the international market.

(c) As per trade sources, share of India in the export of Basmati rice is about 85%, the balance 15% coming from Pakistan.

(d) As India and Pakistan are the only producers of Basmati rice, it is unlikely that India's share of Basmati rice exports in the international market would decline sharply due to competition.

(e) Does not arise in view of (d) above.