

- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) what remedial measures Government proposes to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN) : (a) and (b) Data for the current year is not available. However, as per data available for the year 2014-15, the export of soyameal during April-January 2015 has fallen by around 67%, both in quantity as well as in value terms, as compared to exports during corresponding period of the previous year. The exports during 2014-15 (April-January) were 11.43 lakh tons valued at USD 621.46 million compared to 34.27 lakh tons valued at USD 1,879.00 million during the corresponding period of 2013-14. The exports are lowest, at least since 2003-04, the year from which comparative data is available.

The record world-wide production of soyabean in 2014-15 has created an over supply in the world market leading to a drastic fall in soyameal prices.

Lower petroleum crude prices, resulting in lesser demand for vegetable oils for bio-fuels, has also contributed to lower international prices. The lower international prices have left Indian exports uncompetitive as compared to major producers of soyabean such as Argentina and Brazil.

(c) Encouraging exports of agricultural products is a continuous process. Under the Foreign Trade Policy 2015-2020, export of soyameal is eligible for 5% reward under the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS).

#### **Increase in import of steel**

†610. SHRIMATI KANAK LATA SINGH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that steel import from neighbouring countries have increased on large scale, if so, the details of steel imported during the last two years;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that import duty on steel has been increased by Government, if so, the details of increased import duty during the said period;
- (c) the reasons for increase in import of steel and whether it has been evaluated; and
- (d) whether steel is cheap in other countries, if so, the steps being taken for production of steel at cheaper rate in the country?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN) : (a) Yes, Sir. Data pertaining to import of Iron & Steel under Chapter 72 and 73 of Indian Trade Classification (Harmonised System), 2012, Schedule - I (Import Policy) during the period 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15 (provisional) is as under:

Country	Qty in Ton Values / ₹ Crore					
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15 (Apr'14 to Feb'15)*	
	Qty.	Val.	Qty.	Val.	Qty.	Val.
Bangladesh	13846	88.79	7652	56.84	8714	61.58
Bhutan	102965	617.25	80941	589.93	72480	542.88
China	1770193	8135.54	1120652	5921.24	3522779	15534.84
Maldives	8204	20.67	5196	13.77	5244	14.27
Myanmar	-	-	23	0.06	-	-
Nepal	648.42	395.7	69465	387.97	72494	418.85
Pakistan	2038	24.22	1070	9.75	24	0.07
Sri Lanka	5763	15.47	3227	14.09	871	4.01
GRAND TOTAL	1967851	9297.64	1288226	6993.65	3682606	16576.5

\*Note: Figures for 2014-15(Apr. to Feb.) is provisional.

(b) In Budget 2015-16, tariff rate of basic customs duty on iron & steel falling Under Chapter 72 and articles of iron or steel falling under Chapter 73 of Indian Trade Classification (Harmonised System), 2012, Schedule - I (Import Policy), has been increased from 10 % to 15%. However, no change has been made in the existing effective rates of basic customs duty on these goods.

(c) and (d) Import of an item takes place only when similar item is either not available in the domestic market or is available at a cheaper rate outside the country than the one available in the domestic market. Certain specific grades /qualities of steel which are not produced in the country, especially for the use of automobile sector, engineering goods etc, are to be necessarily imported and such specific imports cannot be stopped. Moreover, steel sector has been deregulated; therefore, the role of the Government is

limited to be a facilitator in growth of steel industry. The Government only lays down policy guidelines and the investment decisions for creation of new capacity are taken by individual investors based on commercial considerations.

#### **Easing sourcing norms in multi-brand retail sector**

611. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is considering easing sourcing norms in multi-brand retail sector;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether all the stakeholders have been consulted; and
- (d) if so, the response thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN) : (a) to (d) Government has not taken any decision with regard to implementation of FDI policy in multi brand retail trading.

#### **Annual production of spices**

612. SHRI ANUBHAV MOHANTY : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) the annual production of spices in the country;
- (b) the percentage of spices produced, exported and released for the domestic market;
- (c) whether the amount of spices released in the domestic market is sufficient to meet the demand;
- (d) if not, how does the Ministry proposes to meet the demand of domestic consumers; and
- (e) what is the procedure adopted by Government to strike a balance between the requirement of the domestic and the export market? .

. THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN) : (a) and (b) The annual