

| Sl. No. | Service | Department/ Ministry |
|---------|--|--|
| 9. | Registration under the Contract Labour Act, 1970 | Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoL and E) |
| 10. | Registration under the Building and other Construction Workers Act, 1996 | Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoL and E) |
| 11. | Registration under the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979 | Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoL and E) |
| 12. | Issuance of EM Part-1 and Part-2 | Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MoMSME) |

Guidelines set by APEDA for certifying organic farms

179. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) under this Ministry sets guidelines and standards for certifying organic farms; and

(b) if so, what measures are being taken by APEDA to ensure the genuineness of the organic products available in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) The National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) provides for standards of organic production, systems, criteria and procedure for accreditation of certification bodies, a national (India Organic) logo and regulation governing its use. NPOP operates under the overall guidance of the Department of Commerce, which acts as the apex body of the NPOP. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) functions as the Secretariat for the implementation of the NPOP.

(b) The NPOP, *inter-alia*, provides necessary guidelines and standards for organic certification for export of organic products from the country. APEDA's remit is limited to monitoring of export of organic products out of the country and not monitoring organic products in domestic market.

Worsening situation of natural rubber growers due to imports

180. SHRI K.K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the situation of natural rubber growers in India has worsened by

rubber imports to Indian market, which is still continuing and according to Rubber Board, the output of natural rubber in India during the fiscal 2014-15 was as low as 6,55,000 tonnes, due to the steep fall in the prices (as low as, ₹ 118 per kg for RSS 4 variety);

(b) if so, whether there is any concrete step taken by the Central Government to procure rubber on fair price from farmers and to restrict import; and

(c) if so, what is the decrease in the import of natural rubber after the recent 5 per cent increase in the import duty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) Import of natural rubber (NR) is influenced by the current domestic prices as well as the rubber prices in international market which have fallen because of lower growth prospects of the world economy, moderating demand for Natural Rubber in China and increase in world stock of Natural Rubber. Fall in rubber prices in domestic market is mainly due to declining trend in prices in the international market, and relatively low growth in the domestic demand for specific forms of Natural Rubber. Notably, the domestic prices of dry rubber in form of Ribbed Smoked Sheet are currently at ₹ 130.98 per kg. compared with the price of block rubber, the main form of imported rubber, which is at ₹ 118.12 per kg.

(b) The Government has recently increased the duty on import of dry rubber from “20% or ₹ 30 per kg whichever is lower” to “25% or ₹ 30 per kg. whichever is lower” w.e.f. 30.4.2015. The Government has also reduced the period of utilization of imported dry rubber under advance licensing scheme from 18 months to 6 months. Steps have been taken to formulate a comprehensive Revenue Insurance Scheme for providing insurance cover to farmers of commodity crops including rubber against losses in terms of prices and yield within specified parameters.

(c) The import of natural rubber after the revision of import duty during the correspondence period of current and previous year is shown below:-

| Month | Import (Tonne) | |
|-------|----------------|---------|
| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| May | 37,918 | 34,772 |
| June | 33,377 | 33,606 |

Effectiveness of the measures taken to influence import of NR is dependent, *inter-alia*, on prevailing domestic and international prices for different types and grades of NR, availability of rubber in domestic market, and its nature and form.

Impact of less import of cotton by China

181. SHRI C.M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) how less import of cotton by China is impacting cotton exports and also cotton farmers;
- (b) the reasons for less imports by China;
- (c) in view of record crop of 39 million bales and reduction in exports, how the Ministry is planning to protect the cotton farmers; and
- (d) whether Ministry is searching for alternative markets for export of cotton and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) Export of cotton from India to China declined by -56.72% from 61 lakh bales in the year 2013-14 to 26 lakh bales in the year 2014-15. As a result there had been sluggishness in the domestic prices as compared to last year.

(b) Cotton Policy adopted by the Chinese Government is the major reason for less imports by China. Two important factors of China's cotton policy that have led to declining trend in export of cotton in the current year are:

- (i) Building up of cotton stock over the past three years and thereby holding a stock levels of more than 8000 million kg (approximately one year's cotton consumption of Chinese spinning sector). To build up the stock levels, Chinese Government agencies kept on procuring domestic as well as imported cotton over the past three years. Once required stock levels have reached, they are importing lower quantities.
- (ii) Reduction in import quota granted to actual users of cotton thereby discouraging direct import by spinners and encouraging them to buy more of domestic cotton and also from Government agencies holding stock cotton.

(c) and (d) The Government protects farmers by providing Minimum Support Price (MSP) to the product. The MSP operation is undertaken by the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI). For the Cotton Season 2014-15, CCI is undertaking MSP operations