

major sectors of the economy. Changes introduced in the policy include increase in sectoral limits, bringing more activities under automatic route and easing of conditionalities for foreign investments.

The Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) project is under implementation. In addition, the Government has conceptualized Amritsar-Kolkata Industrial Corridor, Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor, Bengaluru-Mumbai Economic Corridor and the Vizag-Chennai Industrial Corridor (as the first phase of an East Coast Economic Corridor), and setting up a National Industrial Corridor Development Authority (NICDA) for coordinating and overseeing progress of the various industrial corridors.

The Government has taken various initiatives regarding energy availability, lower cost of finance and skilling work force. These, *inter-alia*, include process for institution of Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency (MUDRA) to provide funding to the non-corporate small business sector. The National Skill Development Mission is launched to consolidate and coordinate skilling efforts, and also expedite decision making across sectors to achieve skilling at scale with speed and standards. The Government has increased the capacity of generation and transmission of power. The fiscal incentives have been given to new and renewable energy sectors.

#### **Fall in export of leather**

333.SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that export of leather and leather products posted a fall for the sixth consecutive month in the current fiscal;

(b) whether exports of leather and leather products have declined from April to September, 2015 as compared to the corresponding period last year;

(c) whether the Central Government has not done much to revive the leather sector;

(d) whether the Council of Leather Exports has requested to come out with favourable tariff so as to revive this sector; and

(e) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) The month-wise Export of leather and leather products for the current Fiscal is as follows:

2015 (P)	Value in Million USD
April	460.21
May	525.11
June	565.13
July	557.81
August	527.80
Sept.	473.24

Source : DGCI&S.

(b) Yes Sir. During April to September, 2015, the export of leather and leather products was US\$ 3109.30 million against US\$ 3437.18 million in the corresponding period of 2014.

(c) to (e) The Government has approved 3% interest equalization scheme for all MSME units in leather sector and for 7 tariff lines at HS 4 digit level for leather goods and footwear for 5 years *w.e.f.* 1.4.2015. Indian Leather Development Programme (ILDPP) is being implemented for overall development of leather sector in the country by augmenting raw material base, capacity enhancement, modernization and up-gradation of leather units, establishment of institutional facilities and support to artisans. The Council for Leather Exports had requested for reduction in the rate of Central excise duty on footwear with leather upper from 12% to 6% which has already been accepted by the Government.

#### **Tobacco exports**

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

(a) the year-wise, country-wise and variety-wise details of different varieties of tobacco exports from India in the last ten years;

(b) the country-wise foreign exchange earned through tobacco exports during the above period;

(c) what efforts Ministry is making to explore new markets for Indian tobacco, particularly Flue Cured Virginia tobacco;

(d) whether the Ministry requested the Ministry of External Affairs to instruct Embassies abroad to explore opportunities to export tobacco to those countries; and

(e) if so, when that request was made and what is the outcome of the same?