

Agreement on agriculture and SSM at WTO

651. SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the WTO Nairobi Ministerial Conference in December, 2015 has resulted in continuation of the commitments of the Doha round, if not, the details thereof;

(b) whether there is a confirmation on the use of Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM) by the countries, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the issue of Agreement on Agriculture had been discussed and resolved permanently during the conference; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) At the Tenth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) held in Nairobi, Kenya in December, 2015, although there was no consensus on reaffirmation of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA), the Nairobi Ministerial Declaration (NMD) notes a strong commitment of all WTO Members to advance negotiations on the remaining Doha issues. The NMD also recognizes that the decisions adopted at the Conference, which include decisions on Public Stockholding for Food Security Purpose, an agricultural Special Safeguard Mechanism for developing countries (SSM), cotton, export competition etc. would remain an important element of the WTO's future agenda. Members could not, however, arrive at a conclusion on whether to work on the basis of the Doha structure or to explore new architecture. Some members wanted to identify and discuss issues other than the remaining Doha issues while others, mostly developing country members, did not agree.

(b) An agricultural Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM) for developing countries is a part of the agenda and mandate of the Doha Round of trade negotiations in the WTO. A Ministerial Decision on the issue was adopted at the Ministerial Conference in Nairobi. This recognizes that developing countries will have the right to have recourse to an SSM as envisaged in the mandate of the Doha Round. Members will continue to negotiate the mechanism in dedicated sessions. The WTO General Council has been mandated to regularly review progress of these negotiations.

(c) and (d) Some of the issues in the agriculture agenda of the Doha Round were discussed at the Nairobi Ministerial Conference. A Ministerial Decision was adopted

on Export Competition, which covers agricultural export subsidies, among other issues. Other Ministerial Decisions on public stockholding for food security purposes, the SSM and on Cotton reaffirm a commitment to continue work on these issues.

Approval to big projects

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

- (a) the number and details of big projects/proposals approved by the Ministry and started since last two years;
- (b) the details of employment generated during the last two years in various parts of the country; and
- (c) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken for generating more employment opportunities to the youth in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) 133 licences for manufacturing various items were issued during the last two years under defence and chemical sectors. The employment expected to be generated in these projects is 35,169 mandays.

(c) The Government of India has undertaken a number of initiatives to improve Ease of Doing Business to promote business activity. An Action Plan has been prepared across sectors under 'Make in India' initiative to promote these sectors. Further, a startup Action Plan has been released by the Government to create a conducive environment for startups in India. These efforts will promote employment generation in the country.

Import of healthcare related devices

653. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India imports over 75 per cent of its healthcare related device requirements, especially in cardiovascular surgery;
- (b) if so, the details of reasons for this dependency on import of health related devices especially those of bioprosthetic value;
- (c) the steps taken to reduce country's dependency on imports in this regard; and