

allocation under MEIS was enhanced from ₹ 18000 crore to ₹ 21000 crore in October 2015.

- (ii) The Government has introduced the Interest Equalisation Scheme on Pre and Post Shipment Rupee Export Credit with effect from 1.4.2015. The Scheme is available to all exports under 416 tariff lines [at ITC (HS) code of 4 digit] and exports made by Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) across all ITC (HS) codes. The rate of interest equalisation is 3% per annum.
- (iii) In addition the Government continues to provide the facility of access to duty free raw materials and capital goods for exports through schemes like Advance Authorisation, Duty Free Import Authorisation (DFIA), Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) Scheme and drawback/refund of duties.

Bringing exporters of cotton under free list

2092. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes to remove the mandatory registration for export of cotton and cotton yarn and bring them under the free list;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the likely impact of such move to reduce transaction cost for the exporters of cotton yarn; and
- (d) by when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) *Vide* Directorate General Foreign Trade (DGFT)'s Notification No. 102(RE-2013)/2009-2014 dated 08.12.2014 and No. 103(RE-2013)/2009-2014 dated 08.12.2014, the registration requirement for export of cotton (Tariff Codes 5201 and 5203) and cotton yarn (Tariff Codes 5205, 5206 and 5207) has been dispensed with.

- (b) to (d) Do not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

Complaint against P3 licence holder in Jharkhand

2093. SHRIMATI NAZNIN FARUQUE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Petroleum Explosive and Safety Organisation (PESO) has received any complaint recently against P3 (for possession and sale of Ammonium Nitrate) License holder from Deoghar District, Jharkhand for illegal sale and blast of explosives in Jharkhand;

- (b) if so, the details of the action taken;
- (c) whether the PESO is considering to revoke the explosives licences for violation of Explosives Rules; and
- (d) if not, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir. A complaint against M/s. Noorjahan Enterprises, Deoghar (Jharkhand) for illegal sale of explosives in Jharkhand was received through email.

(b) On receipt of the complaint, an officer of Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation conducted surprise inspection of the magazine of M/s. Noorjahan Enterprises, Deoghar (Jharkhand) on 09.03.2016. The records were scrutinized, physical stock in the magazine was verified and compared with the online records. No illegal transaction was found. Records also revealed that no illegal blasting has been done by M/s. Noorjahan Enterprises in the district of Pakur.

(c) and (d) No violation of Explosives Rules, 2008 has been found by the officer of Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation, Ranchi. No report regarding illegal sale and blast of explosives has been received from Deputy Commissioner, Pakur. Hence, no action is being considered at this stage.

Closure of tea gradens in West Bengal

2094. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a large number of tea gardens in West Bengal have been closed, abandoned or are non-functional;
- (b) if so, the details thererof along with the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps taken by Government to reopen the tea gardens of the region and ensure that non-functional or abandoned tea gardens function properly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) As per information available, six tea gardens in West Bengal are, at present, closed and seven tea gardens are not functioning properly. The closed gardens, namely Dheklapara, Bundapani, Dharanipur, Redbank, Surendranagar and Madhu are reported to be closed due to several reasons including, *inter-alia*, poor yields, poor garden management, excessive reliance of owners on debt with negligible equity infusion and poor condition of the gardens and factories resulting in low tea quality and price realization.