

Steps have been taken to address the trade deficit through promotion of exports, as described above. Efforts are also made to address country specific impediments through bilateral trade engagements.

**Development of domestic version of ease of doing business index**

2115. SHRI AAYANUR MANJUNATHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to develop a domestic version of the ease of doing business index/indicators for assessing the overall business performance of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to improve India's standing in the ease of doing business index along with the corresponding results thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) has formulated action points to ease doing business in the country.

(b) Various areas have been identified and action points on ease of doing business index/indicators have been prepared for assessing the overall business performance of the country as well as States/Union Territories.

(c) Government has undertaken a number of steps to improve Ease of Doing Business in India. Ministries and State Governments of Maharashtra and NCT of Delhi have been advised to simplify and rationalize the regulatory environment through business process reengineering and use of information technology. Other important measures taken by the Government to boost the business regulatory environment and to improve Ease of Doing Business in the country include integration of 20 services on e-biz portal to function as single window for obtaining Government clearances, integration of the process of incorporation of the company and application for Director's Identification Number (DIN), removal of requirements of minimum paid-up capital and common seal for companies.

**FTAs with African countries**

2116. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T.: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) how the Ministry is planning to take advantage of recently held Indo-African Summit to push its exports to African countries in the coming years;

(b) the details of FTAs with African countries and details of trade with those countries; and

(c) whether any blueprint has been prepared in this regard, and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) During the recently concluded India-Africa Forum Summit, India and African countries recognized that businesses of both sides through growing trade, investment and technology linkages provide a strong dimension to India-Africa partnership. Both sides further recognized the huge potential for expansion of trade and investment in Africa and India. Some of the major trade related issues that were discussed and agreed were: to fast track the implementation of the Duty Free Tariff Preference Scheme offered by India; work towards creating conducive environment for trade facilitation in accordance with the WTO Bali Trade Facilitation Agreement; Support establishment of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Medium and Small Industries (MSIs) in order to promote employment creation and income generation for people of both sides; Promote Public Private Partnership (PPP) by encouraging Indian businesses to set up skills development units in African industrial zones with the aim to train African engineers, technicians, managers and workers as well as other experts in areas such as food security and solar energy; create a mechanism to enable women groups to access credit for productive activities and markets for their products; enhance cooperation through training and collective negotiations on global trade issues, including at the WTO and enter into bilateral Preferential/Free Trade Agreements with African nations, wherever possible.

(b) India has not entered into Free Trade Agreement with any country in Africa, so far.

(c) India is exploring the feasibility of FTAs with Common Market for East Southern Africa (COMESA), a Regional Economic Community in Africa comprising of 19 member States and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a Regional Economic Community in Africa comprising of 15 member States.

#### **Funds released to Jammu and Kashmir for renovation of monuments**

2117. SHRI SHAMSHER SINGH MANHAS: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state whether Government has released/sanctioned the grant for repairment/renovation for old monuments of Jammu and Kashmir State for the years 2014-15 and 2015-16 and if so, the monument-wise and region-wise details of expenditures utilised?