

Permission to commercial surrogacy

1154. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has permitted commercial surrogacy business in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof,

(c) if not, the reasons for issue of the Notification dated 2nd December, 2013 permitting import of human embryo; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to reconsider the 2nd December, 2013 Notification and take a comprehensive view of legal and citizenship issues linked with the subject?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) Government of India does not support commercial surrogacy, in order to protect the interests of surrogate mothers and children. The Department of Health Research has issued a circular in this regard on 4.11.2015 and the circular is hosted on its official website.

(c) and (d) The classification and import policy of human embryo was not available prior to December, 2013. Based on the recommendation of an Inter-Ministerial Expert Committee under the aegis of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)/ Department of Health Research and supported by the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC), Department of Revenue, human embryo was classified and its import policy defined as freely importable, subject to 'No Objection Certificate' from Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), *vide* Notification No. 52 dated 2.12.2013. Subsequently, Government reviewed the position and prohibited its import *vide* No. 25 dated 26.10.2015 except for research purposes based on the guidelines of the Department of Health Research.

Action to narrow down trade deficit

1155. SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the updated details of the action taken by Government to narrow down trade deficit;

(b) as on date, the action taken by Government to increase contribution of manufacturing sector in overall GDP rate; and

(c) whether Government is now focusing on Latin American countries to increase trade ties, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) Steps have been taken to address the trade deficit through promotion of exports, as described below. Efforts are also made to address country specific impediments through bilateral trade engagements. Details of some key steps taken by Government to boost exports and reverse the current trend in foreign trade are as under:

- (i) The Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) was introduced in the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2015-20 on April 1, 2015. MEIS aims to incentivize export of merchandise which are produced/manufactured in India. At the time of introduction of MEIS on April 1, 2015, the scheme covered 4914 tariff lines at 8 digit level. Countries of the globe were grouped into 3 market categories (Country Group A, Country Group B and Country Group C) for grant of incentives under MEIS. Slight changes in lines covered etc. were made on 14.07.2015 and 15.7.2015. Thereafter on 29.10.2015, 110 new Tariff Lines at 8 digit level were added under the scheme. The rates/country coverage for 2228 lines at 8 digit level were enhanced. As on date, 5012 Tariff Lines at 8 digit level are eligible for rewards under MEIS. The annual resource 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) and Drawback/Refund of Duties.

(b) The Government is continuously taking a number of measures to boost contribution of manufacturing sector in overall GDP of India. These *inter-alia*, include 'Startup India Initiative' as well as 'Make in India' Programme under which 25 thrust sectors to provide a major push to manufacturing in India have been identified. The steps taken to create ease of doing business include setting up of an Investor Facilitation Cell, launch of e-biz Portal and Liberalizing Policy for industrial licence for defence industries.

(c) The Government on an ongoing basis endeavours to deepen India's trade engagements with traditional markets and promote them in new emerging areas across countries and commodities.

The LAC region, alongwith other regions, has also been the focus of such efforts, as a part of which India today has a PTA with Chile and the Mercosur block. With the objective of further deepening India's relations with the LAC region, an integrated programme "Focus LAC" launched in November, 1997 has been extended upto March, 2019. Under existing institutional mechanisms, efforts are made for removing barriers impeding bilateral trade. As a result of these efforts, India's trade with the LAC region has grown from \$ 5.61 Billion in 2009-10 to \$ 11.53 Billion in 2014-15.

Reconstitution of rubber board

1156. SHRI K. K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state whether Government has set any time-frame for reconstituting the Rubber Board and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): The tenure of the previous Board expired on 28th February 2014. As per Rules, the functions of the Board, until its reconstitution, are discharged by the Chairman within his delegated powers. Steps have been taken for reconstitution of the Board.

Safeguarding interest of domestic sector against e-commerce

1157. DR. E. M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's policy of opening up 100 per cent foreign investment in e-commerce is looking after the interest of Indian SME sector, Indian industries in production, distribution, marketing and service; and

(b) if so, what are the detailed conditions imposed in each and every aspect and revenue protection in tax income to State and Central Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) FDI in retail sector including e-commerce has been opened in a calibrated manner. The Government has recently clarified that 100% FDI under automatic route is permitted in market place model of e-commerce and FDI is not permitted in inventory based model of e-commerce. This move is likely to bring clarity on the FDI policy on e-commerce sector as well as increase foreign investment in this sector there by benefiting Indian