

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (c) Yes. Government of India has been consistently taking up the issue of tightening norms for skilled foreign workers with the Government of UK including at the highest Levels. The UK Government has been urged not to accept the recommendations of the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) in the interest of the bilateral trade in Services between India and UK and its adverse impact not only on Indian IT companies but also on the UK's own economy and competitiveness. Hon'ble Commerce Minister raised these issues strongly with the UK Minister for Immigration Mr. James Brokenshire during her visit to UK on 31 March 2016. It was also mentioned that the recommendations of the MAC seem to be contrary to the spirit of the Joint Commitment made during the visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India last year.

The UK Government informed that they want to increase employment opportunities for UK nationals given the high rate of unemployment in UK. The UK Government also mentioned that their objective is to reduce net migration into their country and recent changes in their immigration system is not targeted at any particular country.

(b) As per NASSCOM's estimates, the Indian software industry is likely to incur additional expenditure to the tune of £250 million financial impact due to health surcharge and immigration skills charge could be about £31 million and more than £200 million due to salary level increase in the next 12 months. This would impact their competitiveness in the market. This would also make many services expensive to consumers in the UK as well.

Imports of oil seeds

1942. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR SWAIN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to import oil seeds to meet country's demand;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the likely impact of such imports on domestic market in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) At present, the import policy for oilseeds is 'free' subject to adherence to the policy conditions and payment of import duty at prevalent rates. As of now, the Government does not have any plans to import oilseeds on Government account.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.