

- (i) An Integrated Check Post (ICP) has been operationalized at Attari (Amritsar) to streamline the movement of trucks between India and Pakistan and significantly enhance the flow of trade through land route;
- (ii) Agreements on redressal of trade grievances, bilateral cooperation and mutual assistance in customs related matters were signed during the 7th round of India-Pakistan talks on Commercial and Economic Co-operation held in September 2012 at Islamabad;
- (iii) For strengthening business linkages between the two countries, Business Visas are being issued for a validity of up to 3 years with multiple entries to certain bonafide and prominent Pakistani businessmen

Increase in exports

†1024. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether an increase in exports from the country has been registered;
- (b) if not, the status of exports from financial year 2012-13 to 2015-16; and
- (c) the details of efforts made by Government for increasing exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) The merchandise exports from the country have registered an increase of 1.27 per cent in Dollar terms (6.72 per cent in Rupee terms) in June 2016 compared to the same month of the previous year.

(c) The details of key efforts made by Government for increasing exports are as follows:

- (i) The New Foreign Trade Policy (2015-20) was announced on 1st April, 2015 with a focus on supporting both manufacturing and services exports and improving the 'Ease of Doing Business'.
- (ii) In the light of the major challenges being faced by Indian exporters in the backdrop of the global economic slowdown, the envisaged revenue outgo under MEIS was increased from ₹ 18000 crore to ₹ 21000 crore in October 2015 with accompanying enhancement in benefits on certain products and inclusion of certain additional items. On 04.05.2016, the Government has extended the market coverage to all countries in respect of 2787 lines. Hence Landing Certificates shall not be required under MEIS *w.e.f* 04.05.2016.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

This step has been taken as part of 'Ease of Doing Business' and reduction of Transaction Cost of exporters. Accordingly, revenue foregone under the scheme has been revised from ₹ 21000 crore per annum to ₹ 22,000 crore per annum.

- (iii) The Government is implementing the Niryat Bandhu Scheme with an objective to reach out to the new and potential exporters including exporters from Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and mentor them through orientation programmes, counselling sessions, individual facilitation, etc., on various aspects of foreign trade for being able to get into international trade and boost exports from India.
- (iv) By way of trade facilitation and enhancing the ease of doing business, Government reduced the number of mandatory documents required for exports and imports to three each, which is comparable with international benchmarks. The trade community can file applications online for various trade related schemes. Online payment of application fees through Credit/Debit Cards and electronic funds transfer from 53 Banks has been put in place.
- (v) Further, 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 Authorization (DFIA), Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) and drawback/refund of duties.

Growth/decline rate in IIP

1025. SHRI K. T. S. TULSI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state the overall growth/decline rate in the production Index of Industrial Production (IIP) of the eight core industries in relation to fiscal years 2014-15 and 2015-16?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is a measure of industrial production which is released by Central Statistics Office (CSO) at the base of year 2004-05 and it provides index/growth rates in sectors of Mining, Manufacturing and Electricity. While, the Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) measures performance of eight core industries, which includes Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Petroleum Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement and Electricity. The ICI is released by Office of the Economic Adviser (OEA) at the base of year 2004-05. The overall growth rate of ICI was 4.5% during 2014-15 and 2.7% during 2015-16.