

of the Prime Minister to Iran on 22-23 May, 2016, India and Iran discussed the prospects of Indian investments in the areas of fertilizer, petrochemicals and metallurgy in the Chabahar Free Trade Zone in Iran. In this regard, a decision was taken to set up a Bilateral Ministerial Task Force to guide the process for utilizing mutual complementarities between the two countries.

Merchandise Exports from India Scheme

645. SHRIMATI RANEE NARAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of items/products covered under the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS);

(b) the details of list of items/products under the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme;

(c) the total amount of incentives provided under the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme during 2014-15 and 2015-16;

(d) the present growth position of exports during April, 2016 to October, 2016 either positive or negative growth; and

(e) the basic reasons for positive or negative growth in exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) At present, 7914 tariff lines at 8 digit ITC(HS) Codes are covered under Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) scheme. The lists of items/products covered under the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme are available at the website: <http://dgft.gov.in>

(c) The MEIS was introduced with effect from 01.04.2015 and the total MEIS Scrips issued during the year 2015-16 was to the tune of ₹ 4103.89 crore

(d) India has registered a positive growth of 3.92% in Rupees terms and a negative growth of -0.08% in US\$ terms during April to October 2016 as compared to the corresponding period of previous year (April to October 2015).

(e) The growth has not been very significant due to:

(i) Fall in global demand and fall in commodity prices, impacting terms of trade for commodity exporters.

(ii) Fall in the prices of petroleum crude resulting in consequent decline in prices as well as export realizations for petroleum products, which are major items of exports for India.

- (iii) Fall in demand of precious goods like Pearls, Precious and Semi-Precious Stones, especially from Oil Producing countries.
- (iv) There is a general slowdown in the world GDP growth and hence, in growth in World Trade.
- (v) Off late many countries are resorting to protectionist measures thereby impacting our exports.

Development of special economic zones

646. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government has taken a decision to extend the time for developers for development of Special Economic Zone projects in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of the SEZs which have got extension in the State of Jharkhand; and
- (d) whether any tax exemptions and other incentives have been offered, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) In terms of Rule 6(2)(a) of the Special Economic Zones Rules, 2006, the letter of approval granted to a SEZ developer is valid for a period of three years within which time effective steps are to be taken by the developer to implement the approved proposal. The Board of Approval (BoA) under Department of Commerce may, on an application by the developer, extend the validity period of the letter of approval. Some SEZs developers have sought extension of validity period of the letter of approval granted to them for the execution of their projects for various reasons including adverse business climate due to global recession, delay in approvals from statutory bodies, delay in environmental clearance, etc. During the last three years and the current financial year (upto January, 2017), BoA has granted more time to 143 developers of SEZ across the country to complete their projects. The details are given in the Statement (*See* below).

(c) In the State of Jharkhand, the validity of Letter of Approval (LoA) of one sector specific SEZ for Automobiles/Auto Components by M/s Adityapur Industrial Area Development Authority at Adityapur, was extended upto 13.06.2015. Subsequently, BoA on 27.08.2015 had declined the request of Developer for further extension of LoA in view of the fact that no development had taken place since the notification in 2006.