

Export of spices

1942. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the export of spices has not shown considerable improvement in the country despite having good demand abroad;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government is proposing to constitute additional Boards for the promotion of spices; and

(c) what is the total earning of the country from exports and what is the percentage of earnings from export of spices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) No, Sir. The spices exports from the country have touched an all-time high during 2016-17 registering 22% increase in quantity and 14% increase in value in dollar terms compared to 2015-16.

(b) Presently, there is no proposal for constituting additional boards for the promotion of spices.

(c) During 2016-17, the total earning of the country from exports is estimated to be US\$ 276280.29 million of which export earnings from spices is around 1.05%.

Impact of H-1B visa restrictions on services' exports

1943. SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been any adverse effect on services' exports due to imposition of restrictions on H-1B visa by the US and similar other avenues;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) which sectors have been most adversely affected by these visa restrictions; and

(d) the details regarding estimates of losses suffered by different sectors due to such restrictions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) to (d) A significant number of Indian professionals travel to the U.S. every year under various work visa programmes, including the H-1B programme. There are proposals under consideration in the U.S. to revise and reform the H-1B visa programme. However, so far, no comprehensive changes have been made.