

(d) how Ministry thinks that GST would help in bringing positive growth in manufacturing?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) The industrial performance measured in terms of Index of Industrial Production (IIP) has been higher during 2016-17 as compared to 2015-16. As per IIP, the industrial output registered a growth of 5.0 per cent in 2016-17 compared to a growth of 3.4 per cent in 2015-16.

(c) and (d) The Government is regularly monitoring the growth of manufacturing sector and various initiatives have been taken to promote manufacturing sector. These *inter-alia*, include 'Make in India' initiative under which thrust sectors have been identified to provide a push to manufacturing in India, 'Startup India' initiative and 'Ease of Doing Business'. Steps taken to improve ease of doing business include simplification and rationalisation of existing rules and introduction of information technology, setting up of an Investor Facilitation Cell, launch of e-biz Portal and liberalising policy for industrial licensing. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy and procedures have been simplified and liberalised progressively. Goods and Services Tax (GST) will simplify and harmonise the indirect tax regime in the country. It is expected to reduce cost of production, thereby making the Indian industry more competitive, domestically as well as globally. Further, GST will broaden the tax base and promote transparency and accountability in business transactions.

#### **Steps for revival of salt farming industry**

2567. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY bepleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has devised any scientific methods of salt farming;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the fresh steps taken by Government for welfare of Agarias, salt farmers of Kutch as well as for revival of dying salt farming industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In order to educate salt manufacturers, to improve quality of salt, to meet global standards and to compete in the international market, the Government has established Model Salt Farms at Nawa in Rajasthan, Ganjam in Odisha and Markanam in Tamil Nadu. Whereas the Model Salt Farms at Nawa and Ganjam have been established in collaboration with the State Government concerned and Central Salt

and Marine Chemicals Research Institute (CSMCRI), Bhavnagar; the Model Salt Farm at Markanam has been established in collaboration with CSMCRI, Bhavnagar. Further, training is also being imparted to salt workers for skill upgradation. 28 such training programmes have been organized in the last 3 years thereby benefitting 780 salt workers and 40 master trainers.

(c) The Government is providing financial assistance to salt workers for labour welfare and development works, as stipulated under code of principles framed for the purpose. An expenditure of ₹ 98.89 lakhs has been incurred through Salt Commissioner's Organisation (SCO) on Labour Welfare and Development Works during the last 3 years. The expenditure made in the State of Gujarat is ₹ 30.46 lakhs for the said purpose during the said period.

### **Change in FDI policy**

2568. SHRIMATI SAROJINI HEMBRAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to change the Foreign Direct Investment policy in order to further attract more investment in the country in different sectors as a part of 'Ease of Doing Business';

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any foreign investor has objected to any criteria or clause of FDI policy so far; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) Government reviews FDI policy on an ongoing basis. With a view to liberalise and simplify the FDI policy and to provide ease of doing business in the country leading to larger FDI inflows, significant changes are made in the FDI policy regime, from time to time. Any amendment in the FDI policy is notified through Press Notes, which are incorporated in Consolidated FDI Policy Circulars, available at the website of Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion at [www.dipp.nic.in](http://www.dipp.nic.in).

(c) and (d) The Government receives suggestions/grievances on various issues in different sectors. The same are considered by the Government in consultations with stakeholders including Ministries/Departments, State Governments, apex industry chambers and other organizations and necessary amendments, if required, are made in the policy.