

- In India, the revision of return of income is a completely online process and revision by itself is not a criteria for selection of a case for scrutiny (audit). In India, selection of a case for scrutiny is based on several parameters under the Computer Aided Selection for Scrutiny (CASS) programme.

Import of pesticide laden pepper from Vietnam

1143. SHRI K. K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that pepper from Vietnam, which is banned by countries like the US due to excessive presence of pesticides is exported to India through Sri Lanka at cheap prices; and

(b) if so, whether Government has taken any concrete measures to halt such cheap and inferior quality import of pepper to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) Representations have been received from exporters/growers associations regarding alleged import of low quality pesticide contaminated pepper from Vietnam through Sri Lanka. On analysis of the data of import and production of pepper in Sri Lanka in the last 3 years, it is observed that the quantum of total import of pepper in Sri Lanka was very small as compared to the production of pepper as well as the quantum of exports from Sri Lanka to India. Therefore, there is little possibility of Vietnamese pepper being imported to India, through Sri Lanka.

However, the matter was examined in the Department and necessary directions were issued to Central Board of Excise and Customs and Food Safety and Standards Authority of India for taking suitable measures like strict verification of Certificates of Origin and further to check the possibility of contaminated Vietnamese pepper being imported into India.

Merger of DGFT with CBEC

1144. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to merge the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) with Central Board for Excise and Customs (CBEC);

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor; and

(c) steps taken by Government to ensure that all trade facilitation related work comes under a single body to promote 'ease of doing business" for exports and imports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

(c) Government has constituted the National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) on 11th August, 2016 under the Chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary. It is the apex body for driving trade facilitation measures across all ministries. Its mandate is to finalize a National Trade Facilitation Action Plan and monitor the implementation of Trade Facilitation Agreement and domestic coordination in the country. The action plan has overall aim to transform cross border clearance eco-system through efficient, transparent, risk based, coordinated, seamless, hurdle free, technology driven procedures which are supported by state-of-the-art sea ports, airports, rail, road and other logistics infrastructure.

Decline in industrial growth rate

1145. SHRIMATI SAROJINI HEMBRAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the industrial growth has declined during the first quarter of the current fiscal as compared to that of the previous year;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) what has been the trend of the industrial production during the last two years *i.e.* in 2015-16 and 2016-17?

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) estimates changes in the production of manufacturing, mining and electricity over base year 2011-12. As per latest available data, IIP during the first quarter of 2016-17 registered a growth of 7.9 per cent. The figures for the first quarter of 2017-18 are not available.