

Allowing import of sand from neighbouring countries

1624. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to allow import of sand from neighbouring countries to overcome the problem of shortage of sand in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) Import policy of sand under ITC(HS) Schedule-I (Import Policy) 2017 is free. Therefore, the question of allowing/ granting permission does not arise.

Measures to contain trade deficit

1625. SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR RAY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount of merchandise exports from India in March, 2017 and March, 2018;

(b) the total amount of merchandise imports to India in March, 2017 and March, 2018;

(c) the details of India's merchandise trade deficit in March, 2017 and March, 2018; and

(d) what effective measures have been taken by Government to contain trade deficit, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) The details of India's merchandise exports, imports and trade deficit in March 2017 and March 2018 are as follows:—

(Value in US\$ million)

| Period | Export | Import | Trade deficit |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------|
| March, 17 | 29,301.55 | 39,946.67 | 10,645.13 |
| March, 18 | 29,294.33 | 42,820.78 | 13,526.45 |

Source: DGCI&S, Kolkata.

(d) In order to minimize the trade deficit and to boost India's exports, the Government announced a major relief package for exporters in October, 2017 by