

Import restrictions by EU and other countries

1120. SHRI PRABHAKAR REDDY VEMIREDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the European Union (EU) from January this year has started disallowing import of our rice due to presence of tricyclazole which is a common fungicide beyond 0.01 parts per million when the earlier tolerance level was 1 ppm or 1 mg/kg which has now become 1 mg/ 100 kg;
- (b) whether recently Saudi Arabia also stopped our shipment of chillis, cardamom, etc.;
- (c) whether it is not a ploy by the EU, Saudi Arabia and other countries to stop India's exports on one pretext or the other; and
- (d) if so, how Government is planning to address this issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) With effect from 1st January 2018, the European Union has reduced the Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) for Tricyclazole in rice to the Level of Determination (LOD) *i.e.* 0.01 mg/kg from the earlier limit of 1 mg/kg. Import of rice into European Union is allowed subject to compliance with this new measure, which is not India-specific and applies to all the exporters of rice to EU.

(b) Yes, Sir. During the current year, Saudi Arabia has detained some cardamom consignments from India due to detection of pesticide residues above the permitted limits.

(c) No, Sir. The exports of food products have to comply with the food safety norms of the importing countries, which are not India-specific and apply to all the exporting countries.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Patent agent density

1121. SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the country has a poor patent agent density even after the introduction of the National Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy, 2016;