

(c) to (e) India will appeal against the Panel Report circulated in this dispute (DS541) before the Appellate Body of the WTO.

Export Development Fund

708. SHRI T. G. VENKATESH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government is drawn to the concern about falling exports of the country which have shown downward trend during the last one year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether taking cognizance of the declining exports trend, Government is planning to create an 'Export Development Fund' to propose a financing mechanism; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to increase the exports and thereby earn foreign revenue for the country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) and (b) India's overall exports (merchandise and services) increased from 498.63 US\$ billion in 2017-18 to 538.07 US\$ billion in 2018-19, registering a positive growth of 7.91% as compared to the previous year. India's exports has also increased from 262.14 US\$ billion in 2018-19 (Apr.-Sept.) to 266.63 US\$ billion in 2019-20 (April-September), showing a positive growth of 1.71% during current year.

(c) There exists Export Development Fund (EDF) in Exim Bank under the provisions of the Export-Import Bank of India Act, 1981.

(d) Government has taken following steps to increase exports and thereby earn foreign exchange for the country:—

(i) A new Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2015-20 was launched on 1st April, 2015. The policy, *inter alia*, rationalised the earlier export promotion schemes and introduced two new schemes, namely Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) for improving export of goods and 'Services Exports from India Scheme (SEIS)' for increasing exports of services. Duty credit scrips issued under these schemes are fully transferable.

- (ii) The Mid-term Review of the FTP 2015-20 was undertaken on 5th December, 2017. Incentive rates for labour intensive/MSME sectors were increased by 2% with a financial implication of ₹ 8,450 crore per year.
- (iii) A new Logistics Division was created in the Department of Commerce to coordinate integrated development of the logistics sector. India's rank in World Bank's Logistics Performance index moved up from 54 in 2014 to 44 in 2018.
- (iv) Interest Equalisation Scheme on pre and post shipment rupee export credit was introduced from 1.4.2015 providing interest equalisation at 3% for labour intensive/MSME sectors. The rate was increased to 5% for MSME sectors with effect from 2.11.2018 and merchant exporters were covered under the scheme with effect from 2.1.2019.
- (v) Various measures for improving Ease of Doing Business were taken. India's rank in World Bank 'Ease of Doing Business' ranking improved from 142 in 2014 to 63 in 2019 with the rank in 'trading across borders' moving up from 122 to 80.
- (vi) A new scheme called "Trade infrastructure for Export Scheme (TICS)" was launched with effect from 1st April 2017 to address the export infrastructure gaps in the country.
- (vii) A comprehensive 'Agriculture Export Policy' was launched on 6th December, 2018 with an aim to double farmers' income by 2022 and provides an impetus to agricultural exports.
- (viii) A new scheme called "Transport and Marketing Assistance" (TMA) has been launched for mitigating disadvantage of higher cost of transportation for export of specified agriculture products.
- (ix) A new scheme called Scheme for Rebate of State and Central Taxes and Levies (RoSCTL) covering export of garments and made-ups was notified on 7.3.2019 providing refund of duties/taxes at higher rates.

Certifying agency for organic foodgrains

709. DR. ASHOK BAJPAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that in the absence of proper regulatory body for certifying the organic foodgrains, consumers are being cheated and charged heavily by selling ordinary food material in the name of organic food;

(b) if so, whether Government has any proposal to develop proper certifying agency, and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) to (c) Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is the food regulator in the country and is responsible for regulating organic food in domestic market and imports. FSSAI has notified domestic standards for organic products recognising National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP), Participatory Guarantee System for India (PGS) or any other equivalent procedure as pre-requisite" for qualifying the organic food claim in domestic market. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has notified Food Safety and Standards (organic Foods) Regulations, 2017 in the Gazette of India on 29.12.2017. These Regulations require organic food to comply with the provisions of any one of the existing certification systems *viz.* National Programme for Organic Production under Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) or Participatory, Guarantee System for India (PGS) under Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare. Organic Food are required to comply with the requirements of Labelling of FSSAI in addition to that of NPOP or PGS-India. Therefore, a proper system is in place to regulate the organic foods in the country.

Imposition of ban on export of onions

710. SHRI RAJ KUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government recently imposed ban on export of onions from the country after surging of prices of this commodity in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is aware that this decision has upset the onion growers in the country, particularly in Maharashtra;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the remedial measures Government has taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Export of all varieties of onions has been prohibited till further orders