

(f) if not, the steps being taken by the Government to protect the interest of the tobacco growers?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) (a) and (b). Government have received representations from tobacco growers in Andhra Pradesh opposing the proposal to enact legislation for discouraging use of tobacco products in the country

(c) and (d) The proposed legislation was discussed in a meeting convened by the Chairman, tobacco Board with representatives of manufacturers, exporters, farmers, some Board members and others, when it was resolved to recommend to Government, the need to set up an Expert Committee to study the impact of the proposed legislation and keep the Bill in abeyance till recommendations of this committee have been considered

(e) and (f) The recommendations made in this meeting as well as other representations received in this regard have been forwarded to the Ministry of Health for their consideration

#### Export of Wheat and Rice

\*250 DR K V R CHOWDARY

SHRI NARAIN SINGH CHAUDHRY

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state

(a) whether the Government have signed any contract for the export of various varieties of wheat and rice during the current year,

(b) if so, the details thereof, country-wise,

(c) whether the Government have formulated any policy or fixed any target for the export of these items during the current year,

(d) if so, the details thereof,

(e) the comparative prices of these items in the domestic and the international markets,

(f) the total quantity of these items exported and foreign exchange earned therefrom during each of the last three years, and

(g) the steps being taken by the Government to boost the export of these items and provide incentives to the growers during the Eighth Five Year Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) (a) No, Sir

(b) Does not arise

(c) and (d) Government has not fixed any target for the exports of wheat and rice in the current year. A ceiling of 3-lakh tonnes of durum wheat and 5 lakh tonnes of non-durum wheat has been released in 1994-95 without any stipulation of minimum export price. FCI has also been authorised to export non-durum wheat from the Central pool within the overall ceiling of 5 lakh tonnes. In addition, FCI has also been allowed to initially sell a quantity of upto 50,000 tonnes of wheat at the prices fixed for sale in the open market to the State Trading Corporation (STC), for exports. Rice is freely exportable without quantity restrictions

(e) The price of comparable varieties of wheat and rice in the country and in the international market in

October, 1994 were as under —

		Domestic Wholesale Prices October, 1994	
		In Rs /PMT	In US \$/PMT
Wheat	North	3905	124
	West	4850	153
	East	5233	166
	South	6862	218
Rice	North	6994	222
	West	6849	217
	East	6720	192
	South	7296	232

		International Price October, 1994	
		In Rs /PMT	In US \$/ PMT
Wheat	(HRW 11% Protein USA)	5135-5324	163-169
Rice	(Thai Broken 10%)	7277-7655	231-243

Source: Ministry of Food  
US \$ = Rs 31.50

(f) The total quantity of rice and wheat exported and the value thereof during each of the last three years are as under —

Year	(Quantity in MTS)	
	Quantity	Value in Rs Lakhs
<i>Rice</i>		
1991-92	761380	75519
1992-93	562905	89799
1993-94	805540	128009
<i>Wheat</i>		
1991-92	658250	15808
1992-93	36750	1021
1993-94	591	27

Source: DGCI&S Calcutta and APEDA

(g) Government has liberalised the policy for wheat and rice exports by removing stipulation of minimum export price and enhancing/abolishing quantitative ceilings. The new GATT Agreement is also likely to lead to the reduction of export subsidies and internal support measures and enhance competitiveness of Indian agricultural commodities. The consequent enlargement of the market will provide an incentive to growers by way of possibilities of higher realisation for their produce

[Translation]

#### Trade Deficit

\*251 SHRI RAJESH KUMAR  
SHRI NAVAL KISHORE RAI.

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the country's share in the total world exports has been declining during the current year;

(b) if so, the latest balance of ~~the~~ position of our country particularly from April to September, 1994 in comparison with the corresponding period during the last three years,

(c) the items which registered an increase in imports and exports with respective percentages during the above period, and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to reduce the trade deficit?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) (a) Required information for the current year is not available

(b) As per the latest available DGCI&S trade statistics the trade balance during April-October, 1994 is US \$(-)1394 90 million (or Rs(-)4375 97 crores) The requisite data on trade balance for the period April-September 1994 and the corresponding figures for the preceding three years are

	April-September	
	\$ Million	Rs crores
1994-95	-1230 44	-3860 02
1993-94	-440 48	-1381 35
1992-93	-2622 03	-7484 91
1991-92	-1021 43	-2355 66

(c) During April-August 1994 the latest period for which disaggregated data (at 2 digit level) are available major items which registered more than the average growth rate in exports were coffee, project goods, sports goods marine products, chemicals & allied products coal electronic goods, and textiles The major items registering more than the average growth rate of imports during April-August 1994 were edible oils cashew nuts raw hides & skin organic & inorganic chemicals metalliferous ores metal scrap, non-ferrous metals and newsprint

(d) Increase in exports holds the key to the balance of payments problems including trade deficit In order to increase exports the Government have taken steps for liberalisation of trade which include flexibility in export linked imports reduction in import licensing removal of procedural irritants through simplification of policy and procedures and pruning of negative list of exports Export promotion is a continuous and ongoing process and a collaborative effort between Government and trade and industry All possible steps are taken to boost exports in consultation with trade and industry The States are also being increasingly involved in the export promotion process through schemes like EPiP

[English]

Conference of Commonwealth Finance Ministers

\*252 SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH  
SHRI D VENKATESWRA RAO

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state

(a) whether the Finance Ministers from the Commonwealth countries met and discussed the impact of economic reforms in the world,

(b) if so, the details thereof,

(c) the extent to which the Commonwealth Ministers have decided to provide economic aid to each other,

(d) whether any action plan has been prepared in this regard, and

(e) if so the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M V CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY) (a) and (b) Yes Sir The Finance Ministers from Commonwealth Countries met in Malta on 26-28 September 1994 The agenda for the meeting included the World Economic Situation and Prospects, the Bretton Woods Institutions and the Commonwealth Experience and Commonwealth Functional Co-operation During their discussion on World Economic Situation and Prospects the Ministers deliberated on the upsurge in the World Economy, the opportunities arising from the recovery and the problems still confronting their economies It was noted that developing countries continue to play a dynamic role in the World economy and that reforms should be continued to meet the challenges facing the international economy and in particular those of the developing countries The ministers agreed on the need for an enhanced role of the IMF for strengthening international macro economic policy co ordination The meeting stressed that the design of IMF/World Bank programmes should be growth oriented with primacy given to poverty reduction measures It was agreed that tackling the debt problem was one of the best forms of help for the poorest countries The meeting also discussed the serious effects of money laundering on the economic reform efforts of many Commonwealth countries

(c) to (e) No Sir The Commonwealth Countries Finance Ministers did not discuss economic aid to each other However the member countries pledged various contributions to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC) The CFTC established in 1971 is the Commonwealth's arm for provision of technical assistance and skills training for the sustainable development of its member countries The major purpose of the Fund is to take advantage of shared experiences and similarities to promote co-operation mutual assistance and development in the Commonwealth and to strengthen the multilateral links among Commonwealth countries All 51 members of the Commonwealth are the members of this Fund and it is financed by voluntary contributions as member states may from time to time provide In the meeting India re affirmed her faith and commitment in the CFTC and pledged Pound 400 000 for 1994 95

#### Garment Export

\*253 SHRIMATI DIPIKA H TOPIWALA Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state

(a) the present position of garment export to both quota and non-quota countries

(b) whether the Government have reviewed India's export promotional policies and the import policies of the quota countries, and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI G VENKAT SWAMY) (a) Garment exports to quota and non-quota countries during January-October, 1994 have been as follows