

[Translation]

Trade Agreement with Nepal

*523. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :
SHRI RAMPAL SINGH :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any trade agreement has recently been signed between India and Nepal to increase trade and provide additional transit facilities;

(b) if so, the details of the agreement with the terms and conditions thereof; and

(c) the time by which this agreement is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) No Sir; however, mutual understanding has been reached on measures to increase trade between the two countries and to provide additional transit facilities to Nepal.

(b) It has been agreed to make the following further improvements in the trade and transit regime :

(i) Nepal's trade in transit to have the facility of the additional ports of Kandla and Bombay and on the same terms as are available to Indian nationals, subject to the transit of goods taking place in customs sealed containers via shortest designated railway routes;

(ii) Provision of additional facilities for customs clearance at Raxaul for Nepal's trade in transit which is containerised under customs seal from/to Kandla, Bombay and Calcutta;

(iii) Both countries will seek to jointly identify Nepalese products where further improvements in their preferential access to the Indian markets could be considered; and

(iv) As regards procedures for preferential access to the Indian market, these will be reviewed by the India-Nepal Inter-Governmental Committee on Trade and Commerce.

(c) No timeframe has been prescribed.

[English]

Software Technology Parks

*524. SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether under a scheme to promote export of computer software, the Government have set up 100 per cent software export complexes under the name of 'Software Technology Parks';

(b) if so, the facilities being provided for speedier customs clearance and for expediting import formalities;

(c) whether the Government propose to establish one customs office at each park for this purpose;

(d) if so, by when; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Imports by Software Technology Parks Units like those effected by Units working under various 100% EOU/EPZ Schemes are assessed in major Customs Houses by a separately assigned group of officers for expeditious clearance.

(c) No, Sir.

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

(e) The present system of customs clearance has been found satisfactory.

Regional Rural Banks

*525. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHORTI :
SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a large number of regional rural banks have been incurring losses;

(b) if so, the details of loss incurring and profit making regional rural banks as on date;

(c) whether a proposal to set up National Rural Bank is under consideration of the Government; and

(d) if so, the progress of the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY):

(a) and (b). Yes, Sir. A Majority of the Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) is incurring losses continuously. The details of losses incurred by the said banks so far during the current financial year are not available as the position as on 31st March, 1995 has not yet become available. However, during the year ending March, 1994, out of 196 Regional Rural Banks only 25 had earned profits and the remaining 171 incurred losses. The extent of profits earned by the 25 banks during the year 1993-94 was Rs.23.29 crores while the extent of losses incurred by the remaining 171 banks was Rs.382.29 crores (Provisional). The aggregate accumulated losses for all RRBs stood at Rs.1302.53 crores as on 31st March, 1994.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.