

A proposal was also received from Govt. of Rajasthan for setting up of Re-search and Development Centre at Jaipur for testing of textile printed with azo dyes. In this connection it may be mentioned that testing facilities are being provided at Jaipur under the programme of expansion/upgradation of laboratory network in the country at easy reach to the textile industry.

### Tax Rates

4377 SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ :  
SHRI NITISH KUMAR :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Tariff Rates to be at Global Level by 2003" Chidambaram published in "Economic Times" dated November 25, 1996.

(b) if so, whether the rate of taxation in the country is much higher than that in the other countries of the world:

(c) if not, the facts in this regard and the estimated average rate of taxation in India and other countries of the world separately:

(d) whether the Government have fixed the year 2003 as time limit for bringing the said Rate of Taxation at Global level:

(e) if so, whether the high taxation rate would continue affecting the foreign trade in the country: and

(f) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) It is generally that India's average import tariff is higher than that in many other countries including some developing countries.

(d) to (f). No precise terminal year has been fixed. However, it is the policy of the Government to gradually bring down the import tariffs. In doing so, Government will take into account all relevant factors, including the desired level of protection to domestic industry, competitiveness of India's export products which use imported raw materials and components, and tariff bindings agreed to.

[Translation]

### Latest Technique in SSI

4378 SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH :  
PROF. OMPAL SINGH NIDAR :  
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether small scale industries are facing

difficulties due to lack of provision of latest techniques in time:

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor, and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for providing latest technique to SSI in time?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c) Small Scale Sector is experiencing some difficulties in sourcing latest technology. To facilitate this Government is providing technology information and extension services to the small scale units through a network of various institutions at different places in the country. Under the Department of SSI and ARI, Small Industries Development Organisation and National Small Industries Corporation are rendering services to the SSI units through their field offices. Tool Rooms at Ludhiana, Calcutta, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Bhubaneswar, Indore, Aurangabad, Jamshedpur and Hand Tool Institutions at Jullandhar and Nagaur and providing technical support services to the SSI units. Specialised institutions namely Process-cum-Product Development Centre (PPDC) Meerut for sports goods and PPDC, Agra for foundry, CDGI for glass industry at Ferozabad, FFDC for essential oils at Kannauj, IDEMI, for instrumentation at Bombay and ESTC for electronics at Ramnagar, CFTIs for leather and footwear at Madras and Agra are providing specific technical services to the SSI units. 5 Prototype Development and Training Centres by NSIC located at Delhi, Calcutta, Rajkot, Madras and Hyderabad are providing technical training, common facilities, laboratory testing facilities and development of proper technologies to the SSI units.

In addition to above, the Department of SSI and ARI operates a scheme of International Cooperation Programme wherein small enterprises are taken to different countries to acquaint them with latest technique available in their field of production. Also NSIC organises industrial exhibitions every year wherein the SSI units get an opportunity to meet the foreign companies and interact with them for the latest technologies/techniques.

[English]

### Function of Export Inspection Council of India

4379. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the main functions of the Export Inspection Council of India:

(b) whether Export (Quality Control of Inspection) Act, 1963 prescribed any duration for holding the meeting of the members of Export Inspection council of India:

(c) if so, the details thereof:

(d) when was the last meeting of Export Inspection Council of India held and who were the members of the Council at that time;

(e) whether there is any violation of the provisions of the Act in holding such meetings;

(f) if so, the authority under whose Export Inspection Council of India has been functioning; and

(g) whether any action has been taken against the officials if they have violated the Council Act 1963 in either way; and

(h) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) The main functions of the Export Inspection Council of India are to advise the Central Government regarding measures for the enforcement of quality control and inspection in relation to commodities intended for export and to draw up programmes therefor; and to arrange pre-shipment inspection of notified commodities for export.

(b) No, Sir

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The last meeting of the Council was held on 28th October, 1993. The list of the council Members at that time is given in the Statement enclosed.

(e) The Act does not contain any provision for holding such meetings.

(f) to (h). Do not arise.

#### STATEMENT

Shri J.K. Bagchi, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, New Delhi.	Chairman
Director of Inspection and Quality Control, Export Inspection Council, New Delhi.	Member-Secretary
Director General of Bureau of Indian Standards, New Delhi.	Member, Ex-Officio
Agricultural Marketing Adviser to the Government of India, New Delhi.	Member, Ex-Officio
Director General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, Calcutta.	Member, Ex-Officio
Secretary (Technical Development) and Director General (Technical Development) Ministry of Industry, New Delhi.	Member
Director (In-charge of Export Inspection) Ministry of Commerce, New Delhi.	Member
Director (Finance Division), Ministry of Commerce, New Delhi.	Member
Development Commissioner, Small Scale Industries, New Delhi.	Member

Representative of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, New Delhi. Member

Director, Central Institute of Fisheries Technology, Cochin. Member

Representative of Director General of Supplies and Disposals, New Delhi. Member

Director, Fruits and Vegetable Preservation, New Delhi. Member

Quality Marking Centre, Directorate of Industries, Government of U.P. Member

Quality Marking Centre, Directorate of Industries, Government of Punjab. Member

Rail India Technical and Economic Services Ltd., Ministry of Railways, New Delhi. Member

Chairman, Agricultural Produce Export Development Authority, New Delhi. Member

Chairman, Spices Board, Cochin. Member

President, Seafood Exporters' Association, Cochin. Member

Chairman, Council for Leather Exports, Madras. Member

#### Liaison Offices of Foreign Insurance Companies in India

4380. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE :  
DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA :  
SHRI T. GOVINDAN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has permitted four foreign Insurance Companies to open their Liaison Offices in India; and

(b) if so, the details thereof; and the terms and conditions set up therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has accorded permission to Zurich Insurance Co., Switzerland, Yasuda Fire & Marine Insurance Co. Ltd., Japan, Cigna International Corporation, U.S.A. and Allianz Holding, Germany to open their liaison offices in India. Some of the important conditions imposed by RBI are -

(i) The Liaison office will be permitted initially only for a period of three years for undertaking solely liaison activities viz. to act as a communication channel between Head Office and parties in India;

(ii) they would not be permitted to write any insurance business in India;