

(c) Exports of marine products to Japan have shown an increasing trend from the year 1996-97 onwards but for a downward trend both in terms of quantity and value in US dollar terms in the current year (from 1st April 1998 to 31st January 1999). The exports of USA have also shown a positive growth trend from the year 1996-97 onwards but for a slight reduction in value in dollar terms during the current year from 1st April 1998 to 31st January 1999. After showing a positive growth trend in the year 1995-96 the exports to the European Union declined in the year 1996-97 and 1997-98 but have shown a growth in exports both in quantity and value terms during the period 1st April 1998 to 31st January 1999. The exports to South East Asia also increased during the year 1996-97 and 1997-98 but have declined during the period 1st April 1998 to 31st January 1999. Exports to middle East countries have shown an increasing trend since the beginning of the year 1997-98.

(d) The major steps taken by the Government to boost of export of fish and fishery products from India are as follows:—

1. The threshold limit for zero duty under Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) Scheme has been reduced from the earlier Rs. 20 crore to Rs. 1 crore for the import of essential machinery and equipment by the fishery product processing units so as to facilitate upgradation and modernisation of units.
2. The Duty Entitlement Pass Book (DEPB) rates for the export of fish and fishery products have been notified.
3. With a view to encourage conformance to high standards and quality, the units having a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) based Quality Assurance System, have been given entitlement of additional 5% SIL (Special Import Licence).
4. The Government have introduced a new interest subsidy scheme subsidising upto a maximum of 7% of interest over and above a base rate of 7% on the loans taken by the processing units from the financial institutions/banks for the purpose of modernising/upgrading their units.
5. Implementation of various subsidy schemes through Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) for helping the fishery product processing units to produce quality fish and fishery products for exports namely

schemes for the establishment of captive, peeling sheds, cold storages, mini laboratories, generator sets, flake/chip/tube ice making machines, individual quick freezing (IQF) units and procurement of refrigerated trucks, equipment and machinery for modernisation and for export of value added products etc.

6. Various training programmes have been got conducted by MPEDA and Export Inspection Council on the implementation of HACCP system and for maintaining high standards of food hygiene and safety at all stages of processing.
7. With a view to increase the availability of shrimps for exports, MPEDA has been extending capital subsidies for the development of new aquaculture farms and shrimp hatcheries. Necessary guidance and training is also being provided to aquaculture farmers on scientific methods for sustainable eco-friendly aquaculture for increased production of disease free shrimps.

Dearness Allowance

799. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the employees of the Union Government have become eligible for one more instalment of Dearness Allowance due to steep increase in the prices of almost all the commodities, especially the essential commodities;

(b) if so, the per cent of increase in the D.A. that is due for the employees from January, 1999;

(c) whether the Government propose to sanction the same; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) to (d) Dearness Allowance to Central Government employees is revised twice a year from 1st January and 1st July payable with the salary for the months of March and September respectively. The instalment due from 1st January normally becomes payable with the salary for the month of March, paid in April and the decision to revise the rates of DA with effect from 1.1.99 will be taken well before it becomes payable.