

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of places where this facility of PAN is available at present;
- (d) the outcome of this system and the other features of the scheme;
- (e) whether any fine is likely to be imposed on the assessee who fail to get the PAN; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

Value Rs. Crores

Qty.: MT

Item	1995-96		1996-97	
	Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value
(i) Chillies	56,073	194.15	51,900	209.64
(ii) Cardamom (Small)	500	12.39	240	9.21
(iii) Cardamom (Large)	1,784	12.33	1,450	10.47

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. As part of the Comprehensive Computerisation Plan of the Income Tax Department, a new series of Permanent Account Number has been introduced. In the first phase, Permanent Account Number under new series is being allotted to tax payers in city regions of Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai. Allotment of Permanent Account Number under new series in rest of the country is being taken up in the current financial year.

(d) As against 28.76 lakh assesseees on the registers of the Department in the city regions of Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai and 21.44 lakh assesseees, who had filed returns during 1996-97, so far 19.70 lakh assesseees have applied for Permanent Account Number under new series. So far 14.23 lakh assesseees have been allotted Permanent Account Number under new series.

(e) and (f) Failure to comply with the provisions of Section 139 A of the Income-tax Act, 1961 which deals with requirement of obtaining Permanent Account Number, attracts penalty of a sum, which shall not be less than Rs. 500/- but which may extend upto Rs. 10,000/- for each default or failure.

Export of Spices

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

- (a) whether after having topped in the spices export during 1995-96, export of chillies declined 7 per cent in quantity terms during 1996-97;
- (b) if so, whether small and large cardamon, too, decreased considerably during the previous financial year;
- (c) if so, whether chillies replaced pepper as the largest exported commodity among spices during 1995-96;
- (d) if so, whether export of small caddamum dipped to an abysmal; and
- (e) if so, the main reasons for fall in export of cardamom and chillies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (e) Details of exports of chillies, cardamom (small) and cardamom (large) during 1995-96 and 1996-97 are given below:-

Exports of chillies during 1995-96 were exceptionally good due to heavy purchases by UAE, Pakistan and Bangladesh as a result of fall in Production in China and Pakistan. While pepper has replaced chillies as the largest commodity exported amongst the spices during 1996-97, exports of chillies have increased 8% in value terms. The decline in exports of small cardamom has been mainly due to stiff price competition offered by Guatemala and increased domestic demand. In case of large cardamom, the decline was due to lesser imports by Pakistan.

Modernised Company Act

651. SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR:

SHRI PRAKASH VISHWANATH PARANJPE:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government are aware that apart from corporate entities and apex chambers of Commerce and Industry, lakhs of public investors, debenture holders and depositors who have made investment in the equity of the companies or have lodged this funds with them have substantive interest in the 'Modernised Companies Act' which would replace Companies Act, 1956;
- (b) if so, whether the Government have taken any steps to associate these interested groups in formulation of the proposed Companies Act;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government propose to circulate the proposed legislation to elicit public opinion; and
- (e) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) The Government constituted on 5.8.1996 a Working Group comprising of persons having knowledge of law, economics and company affairs to submit a working draft of the Companies Bill, 1997. A Working Draft of the Companies Bill was submitted by this Group on 2.5.1997 which was circulated for public debate.