

foreign trade 199-10
Imports and Exports

49. SHRI BHAGEY GOBARDHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the value of imports has always exceeded the value of exports during the last ten years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to boost exports to improve the balance of payments position; and

(d) the areas or countries targetted and items identified for boosting exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Higher levels of import have been effected to meet the requirement of essential commodities for domestic consumption and for export production, to maintain higher levels of investment and production and to ensure modernisation and technological upgradation of Indian industry.

(c) The Government have recently introduced far reaching reforms in the export-import policy aimed at reducing bureaucratic control through licensing, strengthening export incentives and linking import capability in a wide range of imports to export earnings.

(d) In view of the current balance of payments position, special thrust is being given for increasing export earnings from countries in General Currency Area. While continuing the emphasis on exports to Europe and America, efforts are made to pene-

trate more in the markets of Asia, and Africa. In so far as items are concerned, fifteen (15) broad sectors have been identified for making special thrust in all our markets abroad. These are: (1) Tea, especially in package and value-added forms; (2) Cereals, in particular wheat; (3) Processed foods, including fruits and juices, meat and meat products and fresh fruits & vegetables; (4) Marine products, especially in value-added forms; (5) Iron ore; (6) Leather and leather manufactures; with an emphasis on the latter; (7) Handicrafts and jewellery; (8) Capital goods and consumer durables; (9) Electronic goods and computer software; (10) Basic chemicals; (11) Fabrics; piece-goods and made-ups; (12) Ready-made garments; (13) Woollen fabrics and knitwear; (14) Projects and services; and (15) Granite.

Trade Relations

50. SHRI BHAGEY GOBARDHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the types of trade relationships existing between India and foreign countries like the U.K., U.S.A., U.S.S.R., Belgium, Japan and Germany;

(b) whether there is scope for further expansion of trade with these countries;

(c) if so, the steps taken to promote such expansion; and

(d) the main items of imports for which India continues to be dependent on these countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (d) A statement is given below