

Discussion with US Delegation on Special 301 Provisions of U. S. Trade Legislation

418 SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a high level United States official delegation had held discussions with Indian Official on special 301 provisions of the US trade legislation pertaining to intellectual property rights; and

(b) if so, the details and outcome thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b) A team of US officials visited New Delhi for consultations under Special 301 provisions of the US Omnibus Trade & Competitiveness Act, 1988 on 1-2 July, 1991. During the consultations, which were held at a technical level, the US team explained its concerns, and the rationale behind them, in respect of Indian laws and policies on patent protection, trade marks, copyright, enforcement of copyright and market access for motion pictures. The Indian delegation stated the position as it obtained in these areas in India and the historical and developmental contexts and the public policy concerns which underlay Indian laws and the policies.

While there were similarities between the US and the Indian views on copyright laws and on their stricter enforcement, there were different perceptions on Patents and access to foreign trade marks. In respect of motion pictures the existing agreement

between US exporters' association and the Indian canalising agency, National Film Development Corporation, is being renegotiated.

The consultations helped both sides to arrive at a fuller understanding of the concerns of each other. Consultations are expected to continue when both governments have had more time to reflect upon the concerns of each other.

Rupee Devaluation

419. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has recently devalued the rupee against major foreign currencies; and

(b) if so, the details and purpose thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR) : (a) and (b) The Reserve Bank of India effected an exchange rate adjustment on 1 July, 1991 in which the value of the rupee declined by about 7 to 9 per cent against the major currencies (the pound sterling, the US dollar, the deutsche mark, yen and French franc). There was another exchange rate adjustment on 3 July, 1991 in which the value of the rupee declined by about 11 per cent against the major currencies. Between 28 June and 3 July, 1991, the value of rupee declined by 17 to 19 per cent vis-a-vis the five major currencies while these major currencies appreciated vis-a-vis the rupee by about 21 to 23 per cent.

These adjustments had been necessitated by the growing external and internal imbalances in the economy. The balance of payments situation had become very critical reflected by a sharp drawdown of reserves. Since October, 1990 there has been an appreciation in the real effective exchange rate of the rupee as a result of a relatively high rate of inflation in the country *vis-à-vis* India's major trading partners and a much slower rate of depreciation in the nominal exchange rate leading to an erosion in the international competitiveness of the economy. It was equally necessary to stem the destabilising market expectations which were generated by perceptions about the exchange value of the rupee. It is expected that these exchange rate adjustments would stabilise the balance of payments situation in the short-term and improve the balance of trade situation in the medium-term.

[Translation]

Construction of Bye-Pass on National Highway No. 24 at Faridpur (Bareilly)

420. SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 915 on November 17, 1988 and state :

(a) whether any provision was made to construct a bye-pass to reduce congestion on the segment of National Highway No. 24 passing through Faridpur (Bareilly), Uttar Pradesh, in the list of bye-passes to be constructed in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the reasons for not constructing this bye-pass so far; and

(c) the time by which the Government propose to construct this bye-pass ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

National Highways in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar

421. SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the National Highways in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar affected by rains and floods during the last three years; and

(b) the amount spent on their repairs ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) Generally all the National Highways in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar were affected by rains and floods during the last three years.

(b) The amount spent on their repairs during the last three years is as under :

Year	(Rs. in lakhs)	
	Bihar	Uttar Pradesh
1988-89	472.174	653.47
1989-90	286.550	440.87
1990-91	174.693	(up to Feb. 1991) 293.92
TOTAL	933.417	1,388.26