

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Sir, I have listened to the question. . . (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI KRISHNA BOSE : Sir, I cannot put my question through. . . (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Minister is replying. (Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : If one produces a certificate to the effect that he is Matric passed or failed, that is enough; no further certificate is required for that. . . (Interruptions)

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME : Sir, this is a very important question. You may please allow a half-an-hour discussion on this issue . . . (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You may give a notice for half-an-hour discussion.

#### WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

##### Production of Cotton

\*384. SHRI SURENDRA YADAV :  
SHRI NITISH KUMAR :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have assessed the production of cotton in the country during 1997-98;

(b) if so, the estimated production thereof;

(c) whether the domestic consumption of cotton in the country has also been assessed;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the quantum of cotton proposed to be exported during the above period ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA) :  
(a) and (b) The crop estimate for 1996-97, as assessed by the Cotton Advisory Board (CAB) at its meeting held on February 24, 1997, is 160 lakh bales. The CAB has so far not assessed the production of cotton in the country during the cotton year 1997-98 (i.e. October 1997-September 1998) since it is too early and the sowings for cotton crop even in the northern states like Punjab begins only from April/May onwards.

(c) and (d) For 1996-97, the total consumption has been assessed by the CAB to be 152.50 lakh bales. The CAB has not assessed so far the domestic consumption of cotton for 1997-98.

(e) The Government has not decided so far about the quantum of cotton to be allowed for export during 1997-98. According to the long term policy, five lakh bales of cotton are generally allowed for export at the beginning of the cotton season, with additional quotes being announced subsequently, if required. Cotton export quotes are released after considering all relevant factors, including estimates of production, availability, consumption, likely exportable surplus, price trend, etc.

[English]

##### Trade Agreement with Pakistan and Bangladesh

\*385. SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ :  
SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to expand trade relations with Pakistan and Bangladesh;

(b) if so, whether any formal proposals have come from the above countries in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any negotiations for liberalisation of trade with Pakistan and Bangladesh were held with the delegations of these countries recently; and

(e) if so, the details of agreements signed between India, Pakistan and Bangladesh ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (e) It is Government's Policy to expand trade relations with all countries, including neighbouring countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh.

2. Under The aegis of SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA), the Inter-Governmental Group on Trade Liberalisation held talks to conclude the Second Round of Trade Negotiations. These talks were held in Colombo in March '96, Islamabad in September '96, New Delhi in October '96 and Kathmandu in November, 96 in which India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and other member countries of SAARC participated. Following the negotiations, member countries of SAARC have exchanged tariff concessions with each other on the basis of request lists of products identified for such concessions, and submitted by them.

3. India has granted tariff concessions on 513 tariff lines at 6 digit level to Bangladesh, which include inorganic/organic chemicals, articles, of leather, wood, paper/paper board, textiles, footwear etc. The concessions were granted at two rates;

- (i) 50% of the applicable customs duty for consumer goods and
- (ii) 25% concession for the rest of the items. India has received concession of 10% of applied tariff on 204 tariff lines at 6 digit level from Bangladesh, which include agricultural products, organic and inorganic chemicals, leather, wood and wood products, paper, metal etc.

4. For Pakistan, India has granted tariff concessions in respect of 375 tariff lines at 6 digit level, which include agricultural products, inorganic/organic chemicals,

articles of wood, stone, automobile products etc. While a concession of 10% of applied tariff has been given for a majority of items, a concession of 15% apply for a few tariff lines. Pakistan has granted in return, tariff concession of 10% of the applied tariff in respect of 230 tariff lines at 6 digit level to India, which include vegetable products, inorganic/organic, chemicals, plastic & rubber articles, articles of wood, paper, base metal, industrial machinery etc.

5. During the 5th meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Economic Commission held in New Delhi on 10-12 March 1997, both sides reviewed the status of trade and economic cooperation between the two countries. During the discussions, agreements were reached on the following :

- (i) The following additional routes would be used for both exports and imports :
- A. Haldibari-Chhilahati,
  - B. Ghojadanga-Burimari,
  - C. Barsora-Cherragaon,
  - D. New Jalpaiguri-Tentulia,
  - E. Jalabazar-Betuli-Fultala.
- (ii) A Group of Experts to be set up to examine and make recommendations on issues such as points of entry, list of tradeable produce, terms of payments, quantitative limits and customs and immigration modalities.

[Translation]

**Integrated Handloom village  
Development Scheme**

\*386. SHRI DEVI BUX SINGH :  
DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the number of villages covered under the Integrated Handloom Village Development Scheme so far State-wise;

(b) whether the Government have received more proposals from various State Governments for inclusion of more villages under the scheme;

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(d) the number of schemes cleared on the basis of proposals submitted by the State Governments during the last three years ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA) :  
(a) Altogether 188 number of projects have been sanctioned under the Integrated Handloom Village Development Scheme since the inception of the Scheme in 1991-92. A list of projects sanctioned State-wise is given in the attached statement.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Central assistance for Projects under the Integrated Handloom Village Development Scheme is sanctioned on the basis of viable project proposals received from the State and UTs. Altogether, 81 such proposals were received during the current financial year from States. Out of these, 51 Projects have been sanctioned to 8 States. 23 projects have been sanctioned for Andhra Pradesh, 14 for Assam, 1 for Gujarat, 3 for Kerala, 1 for Karnataka, 3 for Manipur, 3 for Orissa and 3 for Tripura. 15 proposals comprising 11 proposals from Assam, 1 from Madhya Pradesh and 3 from Orissa have been recently received. The remaining 15 proposals have not been sanctioned since these did not fulfil the criteria of the Scheme.

(d) Altogether 105 proposals have been sanctioned under the Integrated Handloom Village Development Scheme during the last three years i.e. from 1993-94 to 1995-96.

**Statement**

S.No.	Name of State	No. of Projects
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	44
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	-
3.	Assam	38
4.	Bihar	2
5.	Delhi	-
6.	Gujarat	5