

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:428
ANSWERED ON:07.05.2012
TRADE AGREEMENT WITH PAKISTAN
Gavit Shri Manikrao Hodlya;Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a high level meeting between the Commerce Ministers of India and Pakistan was held during the month of April, 2012;
- (b) if so, the details of the issues discussed, agreements signed and future plan chalked out for better trade relations between the two countries;
- (c) the manner and extent to which Indian trade is likely to be benefited from these discussions;
- (d) whether the second gate at Attari-Wagah border has been opened for trade and if so, the items identified for trade through this gate;
- (e) whether there is a demand for opening up of the border posts at Munabao in Rajasthan and Khokrapuron in Sindh province to improve the bilateral trade between the two countries; and
- (f) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ANAND SHARMA)

a)to(f): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 428 FOR ANSWER ON 7TH MAY, 2012 REGARDING "TRADE AGREEMENT WITH PAKISTAN"

(a) Yes Madam.

(b) The Commerce Ministers of India and Pakistan along with their official delegations held a bilateral meeting on 13th April 2012 and reviewed the progress made on the decisions already taken. The issues discussed during the meeting included:

- (i) Starting of negotiations for the phasing out of the negative list of Pakistan;
- (ii) Taking further action for encouraging trade through the newly opened Integrated Check Post at Attari/Wagah border.
- (iii) Removal of extant restrictions by Pakistan on items permitted to be imported through the land route.
- (iv) Possibilities of opening of more land custom stations between both countries.
- (v) Drawing of the road map for reduction of SAFTA sensitive lists.
- (vi) Fast tracking of issues concerning trade in petroleum products and electricity and liberalization of visa regimes and
- (vii) Constituting a Joint Business Council to provide an additional institutional framework for regular and sustained dialogue between the business communities.

(c) These discussions are expected to strengthen bilateral trade ties. Enhanced economic engagement would deepen bilateral cooperation for mutual prosperity.

(d) The second gate at Attari/Wagah was inaugurated on 13th April, 2012. Government of Pakistan issued notification/order SRO No.280(1)/2012 dated 20th March, 2012 which gives the detail of all the 137 items which can be imported from India through land route. Indian side does not restrict trade through the land route.

(e) Yes, Madam.

(f) Both Governments have agreed to explore the possibility of opening of Munabao/Khokrapuron route for trade, in consultation with the stakeholders. In the meeting on February 15, 2012 between the Commerce Ministers of India and Pakistan it was agreed for constituting a joint working group for this purpose.