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Title: Need to check illegal importing of Chinese Fireworks.

SHRI T. RADHAKRISHNAN (VIRUDHUNAGAR): Indian Fireworks industry ranks only second in the world in terms of volume of production, next to China. The Fireworks Industry in India is centered in and around Sivakasi in the Virudhunagar District of Tamil Nadu and it is fulfilling 90% of the domestic demand for fireworks since its inception in 1930s.

Fireworks in India have been placed in the Restricted List under the EXIM Policy of India and import of fireworks can be done only after obtaining appropriate import licences from the Government of India. Our Government has not so far issued any import licence for fireworks. But it is seen that there is huge inflow of fireworks from China, clandestinely brought into India, in as much as 600 to 1000 containers every year through prominent sea ports of India and by land through Nepal.

Chinese fireworks contain cheap but dangerous chemicals which are banned in India and several other countries. Because of the cheap chemicals used in Chinese fireworks, the domestic industry cannot have level playing field with China. These chemicals and compositions used in Chinese fireworks are dangerous.

There are many cases of Chinese fireworks being seized in India during the past five years, but the seized goods are never destroyed as required under the Explosive Rules, 2008. They again come into the domestic market to devastate the Swadeshi Fireworks Industry.

Considering the pathetic condition of domestic Fireworks Industry, the undersigned had raised the issue in the House to completely stop the entry of illegal Chinese Crackers in the market. Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent charge) for Industry and Commerce was kind enough to assure in the House that necessary action will be taken in the matter. Subsequently, the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, Ministry of Commerce & Industry banned illegal import, possession and sale of fireworks of foreign origin during the Deepavali Festival of 2014. However, this does not have desired impact as only 30 percent of the manufactured crackers in Sivakasi could be sold since Chinese crackers flooded the North Indian markets. Even during the recent Deepavali function of 2015, import of Chinese crackers illegally continued affecting domestic market adversely.

Considering the seriousness of the problem, I urge upon the Union Government to take stringent action against illegal importing of Chinese Fireworks.