(b) if so, the number of such cases caught; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to prevent such smuggling?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

189-90

Export of Software

1584. PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the export of software has increased during the current financial year as compared to the last year;

(b) if so, the value of export made during 1998 as compared to 1997;

(c) whether the Government have also imported software or ancilliary materials during 1997 and 1998; and

(d) if so, the value of import made during 1997 and 1998, separately, and the incentives announced by the Government to boost the software export?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details of exports during, 1998 as compared to 1997 are given below :—

US $ Mln.

	Apl. Dec. 1997	Apl. Dec. 1998	%age growth
Computer Software & Services	1208	2048	69.55

Source: Electronics & Computer Software Export Promotion Council.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The value of total physical imports into the country of software both by Government as well as the industry is as under:—

(US $ Mln.)

	Apl. Nov. 1997	Apl. Nov. 1998	%age growth
Computer Software	108.40	43.89	—59.51

Source: DGCI&S

The various incentives announced by the Government to boost the software exports include Income-tax exemption, import at NIL rate of duty, ADR/GDR linked stock option scheme, special import licence, enhancement of depreciation limit for computer systems, and liberalized import of capital equipments for software development under EPCG Scheme.

[English]

190

Ban by Pakistan on Import from India

1585. SHRI N.J. RATHWA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Pakistan Government has banned import of some items from India;

(b) if so, the details of these items and reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) Pakistan has been following a discriminatory and restrictive Import Policy regime towards India, under which only 594 items are allowed to be imported by their private sector from this country. These include items like fresh vegetables, pulses, coffee, tea, spices, oil seeds, edible vegetable oils, soyabean meal, inorganic and organic chemicals, pharmaceutical raw materials, tyres and tubes, cotton and cotton yarn, raw or processed jute, waste/scrap metal, metal and its products, engineering and machinery items etc.

(c) Government has taken up the matter with Government of Pakistan from time to time. However, their restrictive trade regime towards India still remains in force.