

(b) whether the candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are given priority at the time of posting in foreign countries; and

(c) the percentage thereof in the service at present?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM (SHRI ARUN KUMAR NEHRU): (a) The Central Trade Service was created with the following objectives:—

- (i) To make available to the Import and Export Trade Control Organisation a regularly constituted and organised service which would help the morale of the officers and enable them to function with greater confidence and initiative.
 - (ii) To remedy the defects in the then existing situation and to make possible to plan recruitment, training and deployment of personnel in a better way so as to meet the various growing needs of the organisation.
 - (iii) To gradually encompass within its fold other cognate activities where professionalisation in the matters of trade and commerce is called for.
- (b) and (c): No Sir, as the officers belonging to the Central Trade Service are not being deployed in our foreign missions at present.

[English]

SITE For Ship Breaking Yard in Konkan Region

1452. PROF. RAM GANESH KAPSE: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Managing Director, Development Corporation of Konkan Limited, Bombay have identified site at Navapur near Tarapur in Ucheli

creek for development of ship breaking yard in Konkan region;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the concerned agency (viz. M/s. Steel Shark Ship-breakers, Bombay) in the matter so far?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL & MINES AND MINISTER OF LAW & JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): (a) and (b) Development Corporation of Konkan Ltd., Bombay, (DCKL) who are the nodal agency appointed by the State Government for development and allotment of plots for ship-breaking in the state, have identified a site at Navapur near Tarapur in Thane District for development of a ship-breaking yard and approached the State Government for securing necessary approvals in this regard.

Indo-French Joint Business Meet

1453. SHRI PRAKASH KOKO BRAHMBHATT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indo-French Joint Business Council met for the Eighth time in Paris in June, 1990:

(b) if so, the main points discussed and the decisions taken in the meeting; and

(c) to what extent the trade between two countries will be improved?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM (SHRI ARUN KUMAR NEHRU): (a) to (c) A delegation of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) had visited Paris on 7th and 8th June 1990 for the 8th meeting of the Indo-French Joint Business Council. FICCI has reported that discussions were held generally to promote Indian exports to EEC specifically with reference to the French market. The discussion had also focussed on the investment policy of the Government of India, scope for joint ventures involving transfer of French techno-

logy besides improvement of bilateral trade and tourism. This meeting would facilitate closer interaction between Indian and French enterprises and contribute to the volume of trade between the two countries.

Production and Import of Almonds

1454. SHRI K.C. TYAGI:

SHRI JAG PAL SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the production of almonds during the last three years, Statewise and year-wise;

(b) the quantity of almonds and other dry fruits imported from different countries during the same period and the amount involved there-in year-wise;

(c) the details of licences for import of almonds issued to the actual dry fruit dealers during the above period;

(d) the quantity and value of almonds proposed to be imported this year under "Export Incentive Scheme";

(e) whether there is any subsisting agreement with U.S.A. for import of almonds, if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the import of almonds has adversely affected the production; and

(g) if so, the remedial steps taken or proposed by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM (SHRI ARUN KUMAR NEHRU): (a) The official estimates on production of Almonds are not available as reported by the Agriculture Ministry.

(b) A statement is given below.

(c) Firm-wise import licensing data is not maintained. However, the particulars of all import licences are regularly published in the "Weekly Bulletin of Import Licences, Export Licences and Industrial Licences" and copies of which are made available in the Parliament Library.

(d) Under the Import Policy for Registered Exporters, import of Dry Fruit including almonds is permitted against the export of Apricot Kernels/Walnut Kernels upto 10% of the fob value of exports. Import of almonds is also permitted against Additional Licences issued to Export Houses/Trading Houses, upto 5% within the overall value of such licences. However, any forecast on the value of the item will not be possible as such import, depends on the individual's options.

(e) In terms of the Record of Understanding between the Government of India and the Government of the U.S.A., the Government agreed to set its global authorisation of almonds (shelled and unshelled) for the period ending 31st March, 1991 at US \$ 20 Million annually. It also agreed to increase the minimum value of licensing to at least Rs. 20,000.

(f) No, Sir.

(g) Does not arise.