

constitute State level Standing Committees to look into the various problems of flow of credit and suggest measures to solve them.

It has been decided that where concessional credit is not available because of choking of district level cooperative banks, the State Cooperative Banks should finance directly. The interest rate for yarn trading has been equalised with that of production activity.

PRICES OF RAW COTTON

2021. DR. D. VENKATESWARA RAO : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the cotton growers in northern and southern zones are facing hardship as raw cotton prices declined sharply this year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY) : (a) to (c) With the cautious policy on exports and timely, market interventions by Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) the prices of different varieties of cotton have remained well above the MSP levels i.e., in the range of 25 to 50%. A close watch was kept on the general cotton situation and the movement of the cotton prices in determining the need, quantum and timing of releases of cotton for exports.

SUBSCRIPTION FOR PROMOTER CONTRIBUTION

2022. SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering a proposal to relax the minimum

subscription for promoters contribution to equity capital of a company going to public;

(b) if so, the relaxation being made for subscribers; and

(c) the achievement's likely to be made there from ?

THE MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

EXPORTS OF AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD PRODUCTS

2023. SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the quantity of agricultural and processed food products exported during each of the last three years and the current year so far, item-wise;

(b) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to boost the export of above items;

(c) whether the farmers get any additional incentives for these exported products;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Government propose to bring any policy paper on the export of agricultural products; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) The details of export of major agricultural and allied commodities since 1990-91 are given below :

S. No.	Commodity	(Rs. Crores)			
		1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94 (April)
1.	Rice	461.57	754.98	971.93	166.54
2.	Wheat	31.13	121.47	10.18	0.20
3.	Other Cereals	2.77	6.74	10.14	0.37
4.	Tobacco	263.39	377.29	483.06	22.12
5.	Spices	233.94	370.40	368.81	58.34
6.	Cashew	441.90	668.45	745.13	59.79
7.	Sesame & Niger Seed	91.34	101.19	116.20	3.47
8.	Groundnut	56.06	7.40	7.95	3.17
9.	Oil Meals	608.50	871.27	1538.51	14.56
10.	Shrillac	17.55	25.10	40.69	6.24
11.	Sugar and Molasses	37.57	144.23	325.09	22.72
12.	Floriculture Products	7.87	13.16	13.20	1.00
13.	Processed Fruits and Juices	60.40	88.38	124.26	7.72
14.	Misc. Processed Items	152.30	243.99	111.76	15.66
15.	Meat Preparations	139.84	230.52	257.04	30.47
16.	Fruits & Vegetables	213.25	348.96	361.44	50.22

(Source : DGCI&S, Calcutta and ISGIEIC, New Delhi)

(b) to (f) India has a natural comparative advantage in agricultural exports because of our lower import needs of inputs, reasonable labour costs and diverse agro-climatic conditions. Government has, therefore decided to accord high priority to agricultural exports and has already chalked out a strategy in this direction. While maximising foreign exchange earnings from the agricultural sector as well as maximising returns to farmers, the strategy would be to do so in a manner that it does not compromise with our food security. A special thrust is being given to exports of horticultural produce and processed foods. Towards this end substantial allocations have already been made in the Eighth Plan.

With the exchange rate adjustments, the introduction of a unified exchange rate, the lowering of customs duties, easier availability of credit for exports on softer terms, and changes and simplifications in the EXIM Policy and procedures, there is an environment in the country today which is highly conducive for exports. Within this environment, the specific programmes undertaken or proposed to be undertaken for the agricultural sector are expected to substantially step up agricultural exports within the Eighth Plan period.

Agricultural exports provide an expanded market to the farmers and, therefore, help them in obtaining higher prices. This is likely to result in a more efficient utilisation of land, labour and capital.

The importance attached to the export of agricultural commodities is reflected in the Agricultural Policy Resolution laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha by the Union Minister of Agriculture.

UNEMPLOYED IN WEST BENGAL

2024. SHRI SANAT KUMAR
MANDAL :

SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN :

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the unemployment problem is increasing day by day despite all the economic restructuring and Government's plan to achieve near-total employment by creating 8.5 million jobs annually for the next ten Years; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to check the unemployment scenario particularly in one-time industrially and commercially advanced State like West Bengal ?