

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2452  
ANSWERED ON:19.03.2002  
OPENING OF BORDERS IN NORTH EASTERN REGION  
MONI KUMAR SUBBA

**Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether Chief Ministers of the North-Eastern States have requested the Government for opening up of borders with the neighbouring countries like Bangladesh and Myanmar to check and prevent smuggling, gun-running and drug trafficking and boosting of trade;
- (b) if so, the details of the problem of funds crunch faced by Assam and other North-Eastern States;
- (c) the present status of trade between these States and the neighbouring countries; and
- (d) the response of the Government to the demand for expanding trade with the neighbours?

**Answer**

MINISTER, DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION ( SHRI ARUN SHOURIE )

(a)to(d): A statement is attached.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (d) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No.2452 for answer on 19th March, 2002 by Shri M.K. Subba.

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the recent years, the state finances of the North Eastern States have been under pressure as reflected in various fiscal indicators, such as fiscal deficit, revenue deficit, primary deficit etc. Gross fiscal deficit of the states has been increasing over the years mainly due to inadequate buoyancy in revenue (Tax/Non-Tax) receipts, and rising level of revenue expenditure.

(c)&(d) Trade (exports & imports) statistics are maintained for the country as a whole and not with respect to States. An Empowered Committee has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Commerce Secretary to promote trade and exports of commodities of North Eastern Region. At the 4th meeting of the Empowered Committee held on 23rd July, 2001 at New Delhi, it was decided that each State Government will prepare an export promotion plan and identify gaps which need to be bridged. It was also decided that Indian Institute of Foreign Trade may facilitate preparation of such reports while keeping in view all earlier reports on the subject.

The Committee on Economic Cooperation led by Commerce Secretaries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries has been formed to promote trade and economic cooperation among the SAARC members. India and Myanmar are exploring the possibilities of setting up Joint Trade Committee/Joint Trade Commission with a view to further promote bilateral trade.