

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4050
ANSWERED ON:20.12.2005
SOUTH ASIAN FREE TRADE AREA AGREEMENT
Sippiparai Shri A. Ravichandran

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether negotiations are in progress to finalise norms for the South Asian Free Trade Area Agreement (SAFTA) which is slated to be operational from January, 2006; and
- (b) if so, the details of steps taken by the Government to protect the interest of country's farmers/traders while selecting agro-commodities under (SAFTA)?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGO VAN)

- (a) Negotiations on all the outstanding issues of South Asian Free Trade Area Agreement (SAFTA) have been completed and SAFTA is scheduled to come into force from 1st January 2006.
- (b) The sensitive tariff lines relating to agro-commodities have been kept in India's Sensitive List (Negative List) under SAFTA. On items under Negative List, Trade Liberalisation Programme (TLP) under SAFTA would not be applicable.