

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1799
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2004
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Kalmadi Shri Suresh;Saradgi Shri Iqbal Ahmed

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

- (a) whether talks on Indo-US trade were held in September, 2004 at New York;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether India has convinced USA to restore benefits under US generalised system of preferences for about 250 agricultural, chemical and pharmaceutical products from the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether USA has agreed to relax export controls on civilian, nuclear, and space facilities: requirement of India; and
- (f) the extent to which it would help in enhancing mutual co-operation between two countries`

Answer

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

(a) & (b) The Government is not aware about any Indo-US trade talks held in September 2004 at New York. However, the Prime Minister of India and the US President had a meeting on September 21, 2004 on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly Session. The discussion included inter alia issues relating to bilateral cooperation and economic relations.

(c) & (d) Under the US Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) scheme, Indian exports are given duty free access into the US market for a wide range of products. The US withdrew GSP benefits in 1992 to over 800 items of Indian exports in agricultural, chemicals, pharmaceuticals handloom textiles, jewelry on the grounds of lack of adequate protection to Intellectual Property in India. Following our representations, the US restored GSP benefits on 42 Indian products in 2001. We have maintained that with the passage of the Patents (Amendment) Act 2002, India has fulfilled its commitment under the WTO as they exist at present and have sought restoration of GSP benefits by the US on all the remaining products. USA has so far not agreed for restoration of GSP benefits to the remaining products.

(e) & (f) The Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) between India and USA provides platform to enhance cooperation in civilian space, civilian energy, `dual use` items and missile defense areas. NSSP has enabled USA to make modifications in its export licensing policies that will foster cooperation in commercial space programs and permit certain exports to safeguard nuclear power plants in India.