

(a) the names of the countries importing software;

(b) whether Government have explored new foreign markets for Indian software;

(c) if so, the countries which have shown interest in importing Indian software;

(d) the steps Government are taking to provide software industry with easy availability of the requisite and current capital goods at reasonable rates of duty; and

(e) the other strategy Government are likely to adopt for boosting software exports?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI): (a) to (e). The major importers of software in the world are USA, U.K., EEC countries and Australia. Besides these countries, USSR, Japan and countries in South East Asia have shown interest in importing Indian software. These markets are being explored.

2. Government have formulated a new policy in December, 1986 with the objective of achieving a greater share of the international software market through integrated development of domestic and export market, simplification of procedure and promotion of computerisation. The policy is geared to assist software export in various forms including physical export on Magnetic Media or on paper, export through satellite data links and provision of consultancy services at the location of foreign clients utilising Indian computer expertise. The Policy specifically permits import of hardware and related software to aid development of software for export markets and also provides legal protection for software under the Copyright (Amendment) Act, 1984.

3. A number of measures have been taken to make it easier for software export-

ers to import hardware and software tools which they require at reasonable rates of Duty. These are:—

(a) Customs duty on imported hardware is 60% ad-valorem. In the case of Exim Bank scrutinised proposals, where the Bank is undertaking the financial and technical analysis of the project and monitoring its progress, a rebate of 50% on this level of Duty is granted.

(b) Procedures for import of hardware and development software of computer and computer-based system have been simplified. Import of new or used hardware is permitted through outright purchase or leasing.

(c) Appropriate levels of export obligation have been specified depending upon the source of foreign exchange for financing the imports of software under this policy.

Besides these arrangements, units established under the scheme of 100% Export Oriented Units or in the Export Processing Zones are permitted import of hardware free of Duty. Government have established an exclusive Export Promotion Council for Electronics and Computer Software with a view to boost exports in these sectors.

Export of Cotton Seed Extractions

*469. SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO:
SHRI B.B. RAMAIAH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a decline in

the export of cotton seed extractions; and

[English]

(b) if so, the measures taken or being taken to boost their export?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Cash Compensatory Support at 10% of the FOB value is allowed on export of Cotton seed extraction.

[Translation]

Handloom Development Project in Rajasthan

*470. SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government have selected Rajasthan under the International Fund for Agriculture Development Programme;

(b) if so, whether Union Government have sanctioned a Handloom Development Project under the said scheme to increase the employment opportunities and the woolen handloom production in desert districts of Rajasthan;

(c) if so, the details of the said scheme;

(d) the amount provided for the said scheme and the number of the poor weavers to be benefited thereby; and

(e) when the scheme is proposed to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e). Do not arise.

Cost of Steel Production

*472. SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the production cost and selling price of steel produced in the country compare favourably with that of steel produced in Japan, USA and other countries;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the remedial measures proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR): (a) As no authentic information on the cost of production of steel in other countries is available, it is not possible to compare the cost of production in these countries with India. The domestic price of steel in India and abroad are however broadly similar.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Steps taken/being taken by the main producers to contain the cost of production in India include raising capacity utilisation, increasing productivity, improving techno-economic performance including energy saving, and improved maintenance and modernisation of equipment.

Instant Tea discovered by National Dairy Research Institute

*473. DR. G. VIJAYA RAMA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Dairy Research Institute, which was set up for R & D and Training work for dairy development, has now discovered instant tea after its