

disinvestment in certain Public Sector Undertakings; permitting FDI in areas including multi-brand retail, power exchanges and aviation; fiscal consolidation, *etc.* The Union Budget 2013-14 has outlined several initiatives to boost investment in infrastructure and industry, that *inter alia* include encouraging Infrastructure Debt Funds, credit enhancement to infrastructure companies, raising the corpus of Rural Infrastructure Development Fund, introduction of investment allowance for new high value investments, *etc.* These measures would help revive market confidence.

CAD of the country

1625. SHRI Y. S.CHOWDARY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Current Account Deficit (CAD) has worsened from the September quarter peak of 5.2 per cent;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by Government to improve the CAD?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The current account deficit (CAD) had widened to 4.2 per cent of GDP in 2011-12 from 2.8 per cent in 2010-11. The CAD data is available only for the first half (H1-April-September 2012) of 2012-13. On a quarterly basis, CAD was 3.9 per cent of GDP in Q1 (April-June 2012) and 5.4 percent in Q2 (July-September 2012) of 2012-13 as compared to 3.8 per cent of GDP in Q1 and 4.2 per cent in Q2 of 2011-12. The CAD in the first half of 2012-13 was 4.6 per cent of GDP as against 4.0 per cent of GDP during H1 of 2011-12.

(c) The Government has undertaken several measures to lower CAD, which *inter-alia* are the follows:

Measures to increase exports: In December 2012, given the lacklustre performance of exports sector due to global factors, the Government announced second round of incentives for export promotion, which mainly included (i) extension of interest subvention scheme for select employment oriented sectors (including SMEs in all sectors) up to end-March 2014, (ii) introduction of pilot scheme of 2 percent interest subvention for project exports through EXIM Bank for countries of SAARC region, (iii) broadening the scope of Focus Market Scheme and Special Focus Market Scheme, Market Linked Focus Product Scheme and (iv)

incentive on incremental exports to USA, EU and countries of Asia during the period January-March 2013 over the base period. Notwithstanding these measures, recovery in exports to major trading partners depend upon pickup in growth prospects both in advanced and emerging economies.

Measures to reduce imports: The Government has further enhanced the customs duty on gold and platinum from 4 to 6 per cent in January 2013 to lower the import of gold.

Moreover, the Government has proposed to provide a link between the Gold ETF (Exchange Traded Fund) and the Gold Deposit Scheme with the objective to unfreeze or release a part of the gold physically held by mutual funds under Gold ETFs to enable them to deposit the gold with banks under the Gold Deposit Scheme. This would bring the gold lying in stock into circulation and will partly meet the requirements of the gems and jewellery trade. It is hoped that these measures would lead to moderation in the quantity of gold imported into the country.

The Government has revised diesel prices and capped subsidized LPG cylinders to consumers to contain the fiscal burden of subsidies in September 2012. On January 17, 2013, oil marketing companies (OMCs) were permitted to raise diesel prices in small measures periodically. These measures are expected to contain demand for oil imports.

Together these steps are expected to narrow the trade and current account deficit in the medium term.

PG courses in Gandhi Medical College, Hyderabad

1626. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN:

SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Andhra Pradesh has sent any proposal for introducing PG courses in Gandhi Medical College, Hyderabad; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken so far?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) The Medical Council of India has received 2 proposals from Gandhi Medical College, Hyderabad for increase of seats in MD(Radio