

SENATE SECRETARIAT

“QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWERS AND THEIR REPLIES”

to be asked at a sitting of the Senate to be held on

Wednesday, the 29th April, 2009

@59. ***Prof. Khurshid Ahmed:** (Notice received on 07-02-2009 at 11:30 a.m.)

Will the Minister Incharge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to inform the House:

- (a) *whether it is a fact that a number of illegal stone crushing factories have been set up in the area of Margalla Hills, damaging the environment and ecosystem in the area; and*
- (b) *the steps taken / being taken by the Government to preserve Margalla Hills and its natural beauty?*

Minister Incharge of the Cabinet Division: (a) Yes, it is a fact that Industries and Mineral Development Department, Punjab had been granting leases for quarrying of limestone in Margallah Hills Range since 1970. Margallah Hills falling in the limits of CDA/ICT were declared as Margallah Hills National Park in 1980s. In pursuance to the directives of the Prime Minister of Pakistan issued on 20th April, 1991 for protection of Margallah Hills and adjoining area in Punjab, CDA/ICT demolished all the stone crushers in ICT limits except two sites *i.e.* M/s. Fecto Cement and Sangjani Stone Crusher, which got stay orders from the court at that time. These cases are still pending before the Civil Courts, Islamabad. However, a number of stone crushers are still working in Margallah Hills near Taxila in Punjab province.

(b) To preserve the Margallah Hills National Park and its natural beauty, CDA, has developed a scientific management with the help of UNDP, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Govt. of Pakistan in 1992. CDA has also started preservation and conservation of Margallah Hills through mass afforestation program. Ministry of Environment, Govt. of Pakistan has constituted a task force on the issue for shifting of the stone crushers and suggested measures for rehabilitation of the damaged sites.

@Transferred from the Environment Division.

70. ***Mr. Muhammad Talha Mahmood:** (Notice received on 03-02-2009 at 08:55 a.m)

Will the Minister for Commerce be pleased to state the details of trade agreements signed by Pakistan during the last three years indicating also the names of countries with which those agreements were signed?

Makhdoom Amin Fahim: Pakistan has signed Trade Agreements with the following countries during the last three years:—

- (i) Pakistan and China has signed FTA in November 2006 which is an operation since July 1, 2007.
- (ii) Pakistan also signed a comprehensive FTA with Malaysia on November 8, 2007 including bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation. This agreement has become operational on January 1, 2008.
- (iii) Pakistan has also signed a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with Mauritius on July 30, 2007.
- (iv) Pakistan is a signatory of the Preferential Trade Agreement among the OIC Member Countries (PRETAS) which was signed a February 17, 2007.
- (v) In order to expand and promote trade relations, Pakistan started Free Trade Negotiations with the MERCOSUR countries, which concluded on a Framework Agreement on Trade, which was signed on July 21, 2006.
- (vi) Pakistan is the member of the D — 8 Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) since May 14, 2006. The D — 8 is a group of Eight Muslim countries. The other members are Indonesia, Malaysia, Egypt, Iran, Turkey, Bangladesh and Nigeria.
- (vii) Agreement on Trade in Services was signed at China on February 22, 2009.

71. ***Mr. Muhammad Talha Mahmood:** (Notice received on 06-02-2009 at 09:18 a.m.)

Will the Minister for Commerce be pleased to state the present position of balance of trade of the country?

Makhdoom Amin Fahim: The present position of balance of trade of the country is as follows:—

Period	July-January 2008-09
Exports	US\$ 10.9 Billion
Imports	US\$ 21.6 Billion
Trade Deficit	US\$ 10.7 Billion

Source: Federal Bureau of Statistics

72. ***Mr. Muhammad Talha Mahmood:** (Notice received on 07-02-2009 at 08:50 a.m.)

Will the Minister for Finance and Revenue be pleased to state:

(a) *the number and locations of dry ports in Pakistan; and*

(b) *the number of persons working in each of the said dry ports with province-wise break-up?*

Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar: (a) There are 13 dry ports established in Pakistan. The location of these dry ports is as under:

1. Islamabad Dryport, 1-9, Islamabad.
2. Silk Route Dryport. Sost (Northern Areas)
3. Dryport Mughalpura, Lahore.
4. Customs Freight Station (CFS) Thoker Niaz Baig, Lahore.
5. Sambrial Dryport, Sialkot, Sambrial.
6. Customs Dryport, Near Sher Shah Bypass, Multan
7. Faisalabad Dryport, Gatti Faisalabad.
8. Hyderabad Dryport, National Logistics Cell (NLC) Complex, Jamshoro Road, Hyderabad.
9. Larkana Dry Port, Railway Station, Larkana.
10. NLC Dryport, Near Askari Park, Cantonment, Quetta.
11. Railway Dryport, Quetta.
12. Dry Port Railway Station, Peshawar Cantt.
13. CFS, NLC Amangarh, Nowshera.

73. ***Dr. Muhammad Ismail Buledi:** (Notice received on 16-02-2009 at 09:30 a.m.)

Will the Minister Incharge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state the names of the parent departments of officers in B-17 and above, presently working on deputation basis in CDA?

Minister Incharge of the Cabinet Division: List of deputationists in BS-17 and above, alongwith their parent departments is **annexed**.

74. ***Dr. Muhammad Ismail Buledi:** (Notice received on 17-02-2009 at 9:50 a.m.)

Will the Minister for Finance and Revenue be pleased to state the extent of tax or duty levied on life saving drugs and drugs meant for rehabilitation of addicts?

Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar: *Direct taxes.*— The general rate of withholding income tax (WHT) is 2%, under section 148 of the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001, on the value of goods imported. However, WHT on the medicines falling under PCT Heads 3002.9, 3002.2 and 3004.91 [being classified as “zero rated” in First Schedule to the Customs Act, 1969 and exempted from Sales Tax *vide* SRO.551(I)/2008 dated 11th June, 2008] is 1% under clause 9 of Part II of the Second Schedule to the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001. The tax so deducted is final in the case of Commercial Importers under sub-section 7 of section 148 of the Ordinance.

If these are imported by “Large Import Houses” as provided in clause (d) of sub-section 7 of section 148, they will not be required to pay any WHT on such imports under sub-section 1 of section 148, in view of provision of clause 57 of Part IV of 2nd Schedule to the Ordinance.

Sales tax/Federal Excise .—No sales tax or federal excise duty is levied on life saving drugs and drugs meant for rehabilitation of addicts on import or local supplies if the same are registered as drugs under Drugs Act, 1976 (XXXI of 1976) and classifiable under chapter 30 of the First Schedule to the Customs Act, 1969.

Customs.—In a critical situation any drug becomes life saving or can be used for rehabilitation of addicts, which depends upon the type of addiction and clinical judgment of the physician. At present drugs used in the treatment of diseases likes cancer, hepatitis, kidney transplant, HIV/AIDS, thalassaemia and cardiac are subject to zero percent duty on their import. The drugs which are not manufactured locally usually attract 5% and 10% rate of customs duty *e.g.* streptomycins, tetanus toxide and those which are manufactured locally *e.g.* penicillins, ampicillin are subject to 20% and 25% rate of customs duty on their import.

75. ***Dr. Muhammad Ismail Buledi:** (Notice received on 17-02-2009 at 9:50 a.m.)

Will the Minister Incharge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state the details of roads, footpaths, bridges and parts of 6th and 7th Avenues in Islamabad damaged due to recent rains indicating also the steps taken by the CDA to repair the same?

Minister Incharge of the Cabinet Division: During the recent rains, no major damage to roads, footpaths, bridges of 7th & 9th Avenue was observed. However, there were some ponding of water on few roads as the garbage/waste/ tree branches/shrubs, floating in the storm water clogged the drains at these locations. The drains have been cleared. The minor damages to most of the roads/footpaths have been rectified completely. It is pointed out that 6th Avenue has not been constructed so far.

ISLAMABAD :
The 27th April, 2009.

RAJA MUHAMMAD AMIN,
Secretary.

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