

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3885
ANSWERED ON 04/04/2025

CLASSIFICATION OF BASMATI AND NON-BASMATI RICE

3885. SHRI R. GIRIRAJAN:

DR. KANIMOZHI NVN SOMU:

Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has classified all varieties of rice as basmati rice and non-basmati rice for commerce and trade activities, if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;
- (b) whether it is not a biased approach and showing of indifference to other speciality varieties terming them inferior to basmati rice;
- (c) whether Government has any scientific data or proof that other specialty rice varieties are inferior in quality compared to basmati rice; and
- (d) the appropriate measures taken by Government to stop this discriminatory practice to classify other speciality rice as non-basmati rice?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
(SHRI JITIN PRASADA)

(a) to (d) As per the Harmonized system (HS), which serves as the international product nomenclature, rice is classified under tariff heading 10.06 at 4-digit level, with further sub-classification into four tariff sub-headings, at the 6-digit level. At the national level, countries further sub-classify their products into tariff items, on a host of different factors, primarily to record trade and commerce and for regulatory requirements. In India, the products are classified into tariff items at 8-digit, notified under the Customs Tariff Act, 1975.

Basmati rice is a GI variety of aromatic rice grown in seven States/UTs of India namely Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, 3 districts of Jammu and Kashmir and 30 districts of Uttar Pradesh. Basmati rice has a significant demand in the world market with exports in 2023-24 valued at US\$ 5.8 Billion with export volume of 5.24 million MT, being exported to more than 140 countries. To distinguish Basmati from other rice varieties, the Government in the year 2008 had notified the standards and qualifications of rice varieties for rice to be eligible as Basmati. For policy purpose and to accurately capture international trade of Basmati rice, a separate tariff item for Basmati rice was notified by the government, at 8 digit with HS Code 1006.30.20, as a further sub-classification of Tariff Sub-Heading 1006.30 (Semi-milled or wholly milled rice, whether or not polished or glazed).

India is one of the world's top producers of rice and is having a significant number of varieties of rice, with more than twenty varieties having been registered as Geographical Indication (GI) in India, along with Basmati. Each GI variety of rice has its own distinct taste profile, physical characteristics, aroma and the Department of Commerce, through the Agricultural & Processed Food Products Exports Development Authority (APEDA) is taking various measures for promotion of rice in the international market.

To enable focused policy formulation and for specific interventions for the growth of commerce and trade of GI varieties of rice, in addition to Basmati, the Government, has created new tariff items for rice based on process (Parboiled, others) and on variety (rice recognised by the Geographical Indication Registry, Basmati, others), vide the amendment in the Customs Tariff Act, 1975, effected through the Finance Act 2025, passed on 29th March 2025.

This measure will be operative w.e.f. 1st May 2025, and will benefit the more than 20 GI varieties of rice, as defined and recognised by the Geographical Indications Registry under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, which are grown in more than 10 States/UTs of India.
