

premium income generated. This is an essential constituent of the service rendered to the policyholders. There is no conflict between the investment function and the interests of the policyholders. While the entire organisation of LIC at Branch, Division and Zonal levels strives to improve the customer service to the policyholders, the investment function which is highly technical is being handled centrally at the corporate office of the LIC.

(b) The LIC have reported that all the policyholders' services have been decentralised to Branches to render prompt and personalised services to policyholders at the nearest point. The LIC have set up Claims Review Committees at the Branch Office, Zonal Office and Central Office level to review the repudiated claims from time to time. Customers' Meets and consumers' Education Programmes have been organised to educate the policyholders about the role of LIC and to know the expectations of the policyholders.

Damania Airlines

7411. DR. LAL BHADUR RAWAL : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Damania Airways has asked for subsidy for operating its flights to far flung regions and on less remunerative sectors; and

(b) if so, the decision taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) The question of subsidy for operation on unremunerative sectors was mentioned by some of the private operators in a meeting held in the Ministry on 12.2.94

(b) in the matter of grant of subsidy for the period after 1.3.94, all scheduled carriers will be treated at par with Indian Airlines and no discrimination shall be made.

Export and Import of Tea

7412. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to import cheaper varieties of tea to meet the shortage of tea in the domestic market;

(b) if so, the total quantity of tea likely to be imported during 1995-96;

(c) whether there is any proposal to export the best and import poor varieties of tea;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government in this regard particularly to curb the import of poor quality of tea?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (e) There being no shortage of tea in the domestic market, it is not proposed to import tea for sale within the country. However, import of tea is allowed for re-exports after blending with Indian tea, only by Export Oriented Units, units in Export Processing zones and under duty exemption scheme of the Export and Import policy.

Imports of tea for reexports by the Indian companies would depend upon the commercial judgement of individual units which import such teas. It is therefore not possible to quantify such imports during 1995-96 and the quality of tea to be imported by such units

Endeavour of the Govt. is to maximise foreign exchange earnings from exports of tea. Export Oriented Units and units in the Export Processing Zones which are allowed imports of tea for re-exports, have to achieve a minimum value addition of 40%.

[Translation]

Flight of AI for Qatar

7413 SHRI VILASRAO
NAGNATHRAO GUNDEWAR .
SHRI UDAYSINGRAO GAIKWAD :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Air India flight to Qatar had been banned for two days recently; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) and (b). Qatar Airways were operating their services to India under an ad-hoc entitlement which was bilaterally agreed for a limited period. When this ad-hoc entitlement was not extended, the Civil Aviation Authorities of Qatar refused permission to Air India to operate their services to Doha with effect from 20th April, 1995. The matter was taken up at diplomatic level and the permission for Air India's operation to Doha was restored on 23.4.1995. During the period between 20th and 23rd April, 1995 only one scheduled flight of Air India was disrupted.

[English]

UTI in Stock Market

7414. SHRI VIJAY NAVAL PATIL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item appeared in the *Hindustan Times* dated April 30, 1995 to the effect that the UTI has been a continuous seller in the stock market during the last several months;