

Coffee Plantation in Tribal Areas

7306. SHRI Y. ESWARA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to develop coffee plantations in tribal area; and

(b) if so, the particulars thereof and steps taken in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI A. C. GEORGE): (a) and (b). The question of developing coffee plantations in tribal areas has been engaging the attention of the Government of India but they have yet to formulate their views.

Agreement for Industrial Joint Venture with South Yemen

7307. SHRI BANAMALI BABU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an agreement is proposed to be signed for industrial joint venture with South Yemen; and

(b) if so, the main features of the proposal?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI A. C. GEORGE): (a) and (b). During the recent discussion held with the visiting delegation from Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen, it was agreed to examine the possibilities of setting up joint ventures. It was decided that the Republic of Yemen would send a delegation of planning experts to discuss specific projects with the Indian Ministry of Planning.

Misappropriation of Excise Duty by Tea Estates

7308. SHRI B. K. DAS CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the three tea estates in Darrang District of the Bishnauth Tea Company controlled and managed by M/s Williamson Magor and Company Limited were found to have taken credits of Central Excise Duty totalling over Rs. 18 lakhs in their Personal Ledger Accounts on the basis of challans, which were later found to be forged;

(b) if so, what amount has so far been realised from the three tea estates and what action has been taken against persons involved;

(c) whether M/s Williamson Magor and Co. has recovered over 18 lakhs of rupees on this account as loss in transit from the National Insurance Co. Unit, Calcutta; and

(d) whether Government propose to investigate into the circumstances under which a nationalised insurance unit could compensate for forged deposit challans of Central Excise Duty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI K. R. GANESH): (a) Yes, Sir. Three Tea Estates, namely (i) Dekorai Tea Estate, (ii) Pertabghar Tea Estate and (iii) Majullgarh Tea Estate, in Darrang District of Assam, under the management of M/s. Williamson Magor Co., Ltd. took credit of Central Excise duty for an amount of Rs. 18,60,761 00 on the basis of a number of challans which were later found to have been forged.

(b) An amount of Rs. 3,06,600.00 has so far been realised. Realisation of remaining amount is pending due to writ petition filed by parties in Gauhati High Court. For the fraud