

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:42
ANSWERED ON:23.11.2009
PACKAGE FOR SMALL TEA GROWERS
Tirkey Shri Manohar

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the small tea growers in the country particularly in West Bengal are presently facing difficulties;
- (b) if so, whether the Government proposes to provide any financial package for them;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) if not, whether the Government proposes to adopt specific measures to protect the interests of the small tea growers in view of the hardships faced by them and also their disadvantages vis-a-vis the big growers; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ANAND SHARMA)

a) to e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 42 FOR ANSWER ON 23RD NOVEMBER 2009 REGARDING "PACKAGE FOR SMALL TEA GROWERS"

(a) to (e): Tea prices have been steady since 2007 onwards. During the period between 1999 and 2006, because of the continued decline in prices, all the tea growers including small tea growers had passed through a difficult period. Now the situation has considerably improved and it cannot be said at this juncture that small growers are really facing difficulties. The average price realized per kg of green leaf tea by small growers in West Bengal during 2009 is Rs.12.34 per kg. which is much higher when compared with Rs.7.58 per kg realized during 2006. The small growers are having plantations at a younger age and the cost of production is lower than the big growers.

Financial assistance is extended to small growers under the 11th Plan schemes for field inputs, establishment of proper leaf collection systems, transport vehicles, setting up of mini tea processing factories and special training on modern aspect of tea growing. The measures adopted by the Government are aimed at improving their farm productivity and quality of their produce and also providing them market access to ensure reasonable return from their investments.