

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:158

ANSWERED ON:30.11.2009

PROMOTION OF TEA SECTOR

Thakur Shri Anurag Singh; Thomas Shri P. T.

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

- (a) whether the Government has signed any agreement with other countries for promotion of tea and its trading;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether a large number of tea growers have stopped growing tea in various parts of the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the Government has considered any strategy to replant the plantations with high yielding plants to retain the labourers during the gestation period; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof alongwith the other steps being taken to help the growers in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ANAND SHARMA)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 158 FOR ANSWER ON 30TH NOVEMBER 2009 REGARDING "PROMOTION OF TEA SECTOR"

(a) and (b): Government has not signed any specific agreement with other countries for promotion of tea and its trading.

(c) : No, Madam.

(d): Does not arise.

(e) and (f) : A Special Purpose Tea Fund (SPTF) has been set up in January, 2007 for extending financial support to tea growers for taking up large scale uprooting of uneconomic tea areas in the country and replanting with improved planting material. Under the scheme, it is envisaged to cover 2.12 lakh hectares of uneconomic tea areas in the country over a period of 15 years commencing from 2007.

The activity of uprooting and replanting is carried out in phased manner in small parts or sections of tea estates. The garden workers are engaged in several other activities required for the running of the tea estates, including the maintenance of replanted young tea. Therefore, they do not become redundant during the gestation period.

Government is helping the tea growers through Tea Board by supporting its activities during the 11th Plan with an outlay of Rs.800 crore. The activities being taken to help the growers include extension of financial support for improving field productivity by creation of irrigation and drainage facilities, extension planting by small growers, formation of Self Help Groups amongst small growers, modernization of processing facilities, value addition, changing the product mix, production of speciality teas including orthodox and green teas etc, welfare measures of the workers of the tea gardens, market promotion and Research & Development support.