

in order to increase the remittances from them?

**SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN:** In the year 1979-80, remittances have not gone down. But we know it for a fact that some of these countries are now imposing restrictions on our labour. The Government has taken up this matter wherever it is necessary and we shall see that the interests of our labour are protected.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Question Hour is over.

### WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

#### Air Taxi by Private Operators

\*185. **SHRI AHMED M. PATEL:** Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the progress in the proposal to allowing private aircraft operators to run air taxi and helicopter service outside the Indian Air-lines net-work; and

(b) when the final decision is likely to be taken?

**THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND SHIPPING AND TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A. P. SHARMA):** (a) and (b). The question of allowing private operators to run air taxi and helicopter service is under consideration of the Government. Applicants who have sought permission for operation of air taxi services have been advised to await the decision of the Government in the matter. None of these applicants possesses his own aircraft.

However, a non-scheduled operator, namely, Sarya Aviation, who has a three-seater aircraft, applied for a single party charter on Delhi-Agra and Delhi-Jaipur routes and was permitted to operate for six months effective from 1st February, 1980.

#### Import of Tyres

\*186. **SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether import of tyre permitted under open general licence by the former Janata Government has affected the indigenous tyre companies; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by Government for helping the indigenous tyre companies?

**THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE):** (a) The present Import Policy has not adversely affected the indigenous tyre industry.

(b) Does not arise.

#### Take over of Sick Tea Gardens

\*187. **SHRI SUBODH SEN:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of West Bengal requested the Central Government for taking over five sick tea gardens in West Bengal; and

(b) if so, steps taken by Government thereon?

**THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE):** (a) In April, 1980 the Minister-in-Charge, Departments of Commerce and Industries, Public Undertakings and Closed and Sick Industries, West Bengal had requested the Central Government to consider the take-over of some tea gardens in that State.

(b) The provisions of sections 16B to 16E of the Tea (Amendment) Act, 1976, enumerate the circumstances under which the Government can cause investigation, assume management or control or take over a tea undertaking even without investigation.

The decision to take over the management of a tea garden depends on the merits of each case.

Government is seized of the problem of sick tea plantations in West Bengal and action is being taken in respect of gardens which come under the purview of the Tea Act, 1953.

### Proposal to Abolish Sales Tax

\*192. SHRI PIUS TIRKEY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item in the Indian Express dated 23rd May, 1980 regarding 'Anti-Sales Tax move to be revived';

(b) whether it is a fact that the President of All India Sales Tax abolition Committee has called the traders all over the country to chalk out the future plan of action;

(c) if so, whether there is any proposal to abolish Sales Tax in the country; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN): (a) and (b). Government has seen the Press Report referred to.

(c) and (d). The Government will explore, with the cooperation of the State Governments, the possibility of reforming the existing sales tax structure into a more modern and effective system in the interests of consumers and traders.

### Supply of Essential Commodities to Tripura

\*194. SHRI AJOY BISWAS:

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) steps taken by Government to supply essential commodities, cement,

steel to Tripura when Railway wagons are not available; and

(b) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI V. C. SHUKLA): (a) and (b). Efforts are being made to improve the supply of essential commodities to North-Eastern States including Tripura despite movement constraints. Keeping in view the rail movement problems some steps have been taken to increase the movement of cement and steel by road to North-Eastern States including Tripura. The State Government can take cement by road either directly from the cement factory or from the dump point for which reimbursement of freight is allowed. The validity period for release orders has been raised from 3½ months to 4½ months. Extension beyond 4½ months is also being given liberally. As regards steel, Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has drawn up a plan to move large quantities of steel by road from Calcutta and New Bongaigaon to Gauhati/Tinsukia and some other destinations in the North-Eastern Region without any extra burden to the consumer. This is in addition to the scheme of road movement from Gauhati to State Capitals of North-Eastern States which is in operation since July, 1979.

### Bank Credit to Artisans and Agriculturists

\*195. SHRI AMARSINH V. RATHAWA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the artisans, weaker sections and agriculturists have not been getting their due share of bank credit under various schemes from nationalised banks under the Rural Investment Development Programme; and