

Supply of Rail Coaches to Sudan

*395. SHRI M. S. SIVASWAMY : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any agreement was reached with Sudan for the supply of Rail coaches; and

(b) if so, the salient features thereof and the foreign exchange earned or likely to be earned in the deal?

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L. N. MISHRA) : (a) and (b). No. Sir.

Abolition of III Class on Railway Trains

*396. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is proposed to abolish III class in the Passenger and Mail Trains;

(b) if so, whether any scheme has been drawn in this regard; and

(c) the period within which this process is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI T. A. PAI) : (a) to (c). It is not proposed to abolish Third Class. The intention is to reclassify the existing accommodation, plan adequately for increased demand and reduce overcrowding in the existing Third Class. These problems are being studied in all their aspects.

Special Measures to Improve Tea Industry

*397. SHRI M. M. JOSEPH : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have taken any special measures to improve tea industry in the country; and

(b) if so, the broad outlines thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI A. C. GEORGE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Tea Board operates three financial assistance schemes for the development of the tea industry. These are Tea Machinery and Irrigation Equipment Hire Purchase Scheme, Tea

Plantation Finance Scheme and the Re-plantation Subsidy Scheme.

Under the Tea Machinery and Irrigation Equipment Hire Purchase Scheme introduced in 1961, tea estates are able to obtain the sophisticated machinery required in the factories to produce better quality teas. Irrigation equipment is also supplied under this scheme to provide wherever necessary sprinkler irrigation during the dry months. The Tea Plantation Finance Scheme was introduced in 1962/63 and provides loans for new plantings to cover extensions replanting and/or replacements. The Replantation Subsidy Scheme was introduced in 1968 to help the industry to achieve an annual replantation rate of two percent of the total area under tea with good quality of planting materials. The main purpose of this scheme is to ensure that the over-aged and uneconomic areas of tea are replanted urgently so that the productive efficiency and competitive ability of the Indian Tea Industry do not suffer.

Progress of Adhwara Project in North Bihar

*398. SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA : Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state :

(a) what is the latest position with regard to the execution of the Adhwara Project in North Bihar and the schedule of its completion;

(b) whether any decision has been taken to construct embankments on both sides of river Mohini of the Adhwara group from Singhbara in Darbhanga District to river Khirai; and

(c) whether there is any proposal for constructing bridge-cum-sluice gate across river Khirai near villages Hari-harpur-Maligaon and Muraitha and if so, a gist thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI B. N. KUREEL) : (a) and (b). The flood control project for the Adhwara Group of rivers recommended by the Technical Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1964 consists of the following :

(i) Embankments along Lakhandei-Darbhangha-Bagmati and Mohini in a length of about 65 km.