

(b) As far as Public Sector Banks are concerned, RBI has released the amount on the basis of claims filed by individual banks; and State-wise details are not available. As far as Co-operative Banks and RRBs are concerned, an amount of Rs. 7.22 crores and Rs. 18.48 crores has been released during the period 1st April 1994 to 30th June 1995 as grant and loan respectively.

(c) The actual amount of loss claimed to have been incurred by the banks by way of loss of interest due to delay in settlement of the claims that Cooperative Banks have incurred loss by way of interest owing to delay of Central Government in releasing funds is not well founded as it is mainly based on the application of interest to doubtful and chronic overdues.

(d) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) have reported that all the claims of public sector banks, cooperative banks and regional Rural Banks in the State of Gujarat have since been settled, as per policy guidelines.

EXPORT OF ADULTERATED TEA TO RUSSIA

1792. Shri Ram Kripal Yadav :
Shri Srikanta Jena :
Shri S. S. R. Rajendra Kumar :
Shri Chhedi Paswan :

Will the **Minister of Commerce** be pleased to state :

(a) whether the market for Indian tea in Russia has been coming down year after year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it has come to the notice of the Government that adulterated tea is being exported to Russia by some exporting firms;

(d) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard; and

(e) the steps taken to boost export of quality tea to Russia ?

The Minister of State of the Ministry of Commerce (Shri P. Chidambaram) : (a) and (b) Prior to the disintegration of the erstwhile USSR, trade between the two countries was governed by Annual Trade Agreements which, inter-alia, specified quantities of Indian tea for export to the USSR. After the disintegration of the USSR, exports of tea to Russia and other CIS countries have shown a decline on account of lower imports by those countries, as well as stiff competition from other countries like Sri Lanka, Indonesia etc. which produce cheaper varieties of tea.

(c) Complaints were received by the Tea Board in 1993 against a few exporters of export of sub-standard and inferior quality teas to Russia & other CIS countries.

(d) These complaints were investigated by the Tea Board and suitable action has been taken under the provisions of the Tea (Distribution & Export) Control Order, 1957 against six exporters.

(e) In order to step up exports of Indian tea to Russia, an agreement has been signed with the Russian Government which, inter-alia provides for import of tea by Russia under the debt repayment mechanism. A new module of promotional strategies has been approved by the Government for Russia and other CIS markets which is being undertaken by the Tea Board in consultation with the tea industry. In order to enforce strict quality control in exports of tea to Russia, exporters have been advised to obtain quality certificates from SGS, India or any other agency recognised by the Russian importers.

Other steps taken to boost export of tea include promotional campaigns through Tea Board's office at Moscow. It consists of (i) participation in trade fairs/exhibitions; (ii) media campaign to increase consumer awareness towards various unique characteristics of Indian tea; (iii) media campaign to popularise Indian tea through the Tea Board marketing symbol.

[Translation]

PROJECTS/SCHEMES OF PRIVATE AIRLINES

1793. Shri Janardan Misra : Will the **Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism** be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the projects/schemes submitted by the private airlines in response to its invitation by the Union Government;

(b) whether the Government have examined these schemes;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the time by which these are likely to be examined ?

The Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism (Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad) : (a) to (d) Private scheduled operators have been requested to submit perspective plan of their fleet expansion. The plans have not been received so far.

CANCELLATION OF SCHEDULED FLIGHTS TO CHANDIGARH

1794. Shri Anand Ratna Maurya : Will the **Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism** be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to cancel all the scheduled flights to Chandigarh;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the decision of the Government has been protested strongly; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto ?

The Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism (Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. Although Indian Airlines have withdrawn services to/from Chandigarh due to poor load factor, scheduled services are being provided by Archana Airways.